1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 176-C]

The huts are built by women, and each woman 592
regards this part of the camp as her property. [462]
It is there that the family lives: the food is
prepared and cooked over a fire in front of the
hut entrance; the children play near the hut;
the husband sits by the fire, doing odd jobs,
guarding the food in his wife's absence, or helping
her in some way or another. Visitors do not
enter the hut but wait outside where they meet
any member of the family. Owing to the custom 621
of exogamy of hunting bands, allegedly on a 628
patrilineal-patrilocal basis,[1] the married women 609
may all be strangers to one another. In some 582
cases most of the women come from the same 591
neighboring band, so their communal interest is [613]
greater, but generally they come from widely [594]
dispersed bands and are more interested in their
own marital families than they are in their new
band as a whole. The men, however, are bound
by the strongest ties of kinship and mutual
interest in the band, as such, and in the particular
territory within which it moves. Conflict [578]
between the hunting band and individual family,
then, is generally a conflict between men
and women, and, by enlargement, between two
or more bands—the band of the men and those
of the women involved.

[NET HUNTERS]

apart from the villagers, whatever the origin of the actual ceremonies. 881 177 171

Marriage

Putnam is able to cite several cases of conflict over marriage, proposed or accomplished, and while such conflict may secondarily be between two lineages, it is primarily between the hunting band (whether it composes a single lineage or more than one) and the individual concerned. Putnam mentions neither arranged marriages nor the betrothal of infants, although there may be bands with whom marriage is preferred. The net-hunting Mbuti themselves simply say "the further away the better," referring to geographical distance. Kinship distance means little to them, though all cite general rules of bilateral lineage exogamy. 58 [578] [621] [613] [613]

Putnam says that the hunting band is meant to be an exogamous unit, but that in 58 621

[P. 219-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BANDS

There is no account of formal relationships 628
between different bands of net hunters. Infor- 574
mal relationships are created through inter-band visits. These visits may be made by individual Pygmies or by whole families and may be occasioned by the desire (particularly among womenfolk) to see relatives or to seek a spouse, or by some dispute leading to ostracism, or by trouble between the individual concerned and his villager patron. The visits, according to Putnam, may become permanent but normally last only two or three months, which would
allow for one or two changes of camp. These vis- [584]
its are important with respect to the practice of [613]
exchange marriage and lineage exogamy (which [184]
may amount to exogamy of the hunting band, though among the net hunters less frequently than among the archers) as an important way of allowing marriageable couples to meet and become known to each other's families.

Occasionally two or even three bands join to 628
form a single hunting unit. Under these circum- 476
stances each sets up separate but adjoining 361
camps. If, as may happen though rarely, this association continues, the camps are moved closer to each other and finally become part of the same camp. In one of the final stages of the process of fusion, the two groups build their huts in the same clearing, but each as a distinct
unit. Similarly, fission may be preceded by a [578]
gradual physical splitting of the camp. Each [621]

[P 228-D]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

P
628 [P.229-A]
476 change of camp may thus reveal significant
361 tendencies not only in interpersonal relations
578 but also in the composition of the band itself.
621

Relationships Between Mbuti and Villagers

P
177 Putnam had the advantage of being able to
571 observe the changes in composition of the Epulu
Z hunting band and its ties with neighboring villagers
563 for more than two decades. As is stated
571 above, the relationship between the net hunters
and their villager neighbors is an individual and
strongly personal relationship, as described by
P Schebesta (p. 185). The effect is that of an in-
Z herited relationship, but inheritance is not the
[428] basis. The effect is maintained only by the closeness
of the personal bonds of loyalty and affection.
If these bonds are weakened through any
cause, there is nothing to stop the Pygmy from
changing his allegiance to another villager. It
Z may cause bad feeling between him and his pa-
[628] tron, but it primarily affects the relationship between
the two villagers concerned.

[NET HUNTERS]

In the absence of any "elder," it is difficult at first to understand the legal system and how it functions. From the examples cited, however, it appears that one of the first rights of every Mbuti is the right of self help, but because of the nature of the band in which he lives it is unlikely that any serious dispute will remain restricted to the original participants and left to them to settle. Such can happen, and has, but usually the dispute is widened, involving more and more of the others and, finally, the whole band itself, until a settlement is reached. 627 578

Thus in a case of incest between members of the same lineage, the first act on the part of the girl's family was to pursue the boy, threatening him with knives and spears and driving him from the camp. There, they said, he could die. He would get no shelter and no food. Returning from this chase, they promptly tore down the house of the boy's "father" (actually his father's brother, with whom the boy was staying). As far as the offended family were concerned, the matter was finished, but the "father" thought otherwise and threatened to take counteraction. At this point, while the womenfolk on the girl's side were making the usual demonstrations of grief (throwing themselves on the ground and beating themselves) and the men on both sides were brandishing spears, knives, and bows and arrows, the dispute degenerated into the practical consideration of where the houseless "father" was 627 684 [152]

[P. 230-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

621 627 684 Younger men, regardless of family or lineage ties, brought food to the transgressor, who stayed outside the camp for two days. His reappearance on the third day caused no excitement on either side. This must not be taken as a full account of the incident. Undoubtedly a great deal is not known about how the settlement was effected, but it is useful to show with what informality a serious transgression can be dealt with.

571 The intimate nature of a Pygmy camp is stressed by Putnam. Even in the middle of the night, when people are inside their huts, a conversation at one end of the camp can be clearly heard at the opposite end. Thus, even a matrimonial squabble may well become enlarged 578 627 [593] until it involves the entire band. Matrimonial disagreements and allegations of flirtation and of selfishness or dishonesty in the division of the meat are frequent causes for dispute. [626] Disputes may be resolved entirely by self help, which may involve a fight or a beating, by public abuse or ridicule during the group discussion, by ostracism, or exile. 578 626 562 The group discussion, mainly among men but with comments hurled at them by their wives, is the main regulatory mechanism. Both Schebesta and Putnam agreed that the part played by the women, who do not participate directly in these

[P. 231-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 231-C]

gatherings of the men but sit outside their huts, listening and making loud comments, is not insignificant. In the early stages of a dispute among the net hunters, a woman may take a leading part on behalf of whichever member of her family is involved, but not when the dispute becomes the topic of these evening discussions. 578 626 562

Apart from the driving of the incestuous youth from the camp, there is no record of even temporary forcible exile from an Mbuti band. Individuals who offend the group are, however, ostracized and induced to go elsewhere. 627 [684]

Whatever the dispute, and at whatever level it takes place, the entire band is concerned in its settlement. If it is settled in its early stages, it may be assumed that it is with the approval of all. As long as a single voice is raised in disagreement, the dispute continues. Even over a question of hunting, or of moving camp, it may take several days, says Putnam, to reach a decision.

POLITICAL LIFE

The fact that authority is vested in the lineage 184
for the archers, and in the great hunters 554
among the net hunters, is mentioned above as
one of the major differences corresponding to
the difference in hunting technique. Also relative [562]
to this difference is the greater emphasis
laid by Putnam on the participation of women
in public discussion among the net hunters. We 578
cannot go beyond this bare observation of fact, 621
however, as there is no recorded description of
authority in action beyond one or two isolated 627
records of conjugal disputes. From these it is
evident how even a private dispute enlarges its
bounds by being taken up by all within earshot
(which means in effect all in the camp), until
everyone is involved. If the dispute is settled before
it reaches these proportions, it can be assumed
that it is with the approval of the entire
group, as they are all aware of it whether they

[P. 246-D]

[P.247-A]

578 have taken part or not. With Schebesta's archers
621 it seems that the lineage elder is the final
627 authority, below which rank the family heads.

[184] Whereas the status of men is related to hunting
[554] ability and to proficiency in the arts of
554 mime, dance, and song, the factors involved in
555 determining the status of women are not clear.
562 Fertility is probably one factor, and, almost
certainly, ability as a singer another, for a good
singer takes a leading part in the *elima* celebrations.
554 The *elima* itself may be connected with
881 adult male status, since one of its main features
is the battle between the young men seeking to gain admission to the *elima* hut and the women guarding it. Married men may and do take part in this battle, but there comes a point when a man has neither the incentive nor, possibly, the necessary stamina. Anne Putnam writes of one elderly Mbuti, still active as a hunter, who was seen to cry during an *elima* festival. In response to a question he answered: "I fought my way into many an Alima hut when I was younger. Now I have no desires. It saddens me" (Putnam,
[558] 1954, 218). A young man who does not
take part in the *elima* is a subject for ridicule.

defined way, they do not hesitate to return at once to the forest. On P
the other hand, if they consider the death perfectly natural, they do 761
not want to be bothered with a senseless preoccupation with causes. 764
They know that in the course of the discussion the villagers will find P
opportunity to raise a number of issues better forgotten, such as un- [648]
fulfilled obligations, and they are also uneasy at keeping the name
of the dead person alive, in this way, for longer than is necessary. The
forest procedure would simply be to bury the body, probably by pull-
ing the hut down on top of it, then to abandon the camp and build
a new one, never again mentioning the dead person by name.

On one occasion already cited (p. 10), an Mbuti funeral party re- P
turning from the grave converted itself into a wedding party. On an- 761
other occasion, when the Mbuti were in a particularly festive mood 764 C
and were bent on a long stay in the village, they played along with 761
the witch-hunt even to the point of suggesting a second diviner from 764
another village to check the findings of the first, stretching the pro- 754
ceedings out in this way for nearly a week. This meant that all the 787
"mourners" (and Mbuti from villages up to twenty miles away came
to this funeral) had to be fed for that long by the villagers. When P
the final act was done and the diviner had pointed out the witch that C
had "caused" the death, the Mbuti became annoyed that the vil- [782]
lagers said something would have to be done about it, talking about [783]
a propitiation and a cleansing ceremony, with restitution. When the
Mbuti saw they could not talk the villagers out of these less popular
final rites, they returned to the forest, taking the "witch" with them.

On the few occasions on which I have seen the Mbuti apparently P
go through with the act until the very end—that is, divining the witch, 177*
accusing him or her, trying the case, giving judgment and going 761
through the necessary cleansing rituals and actually making the nec- 754
essary restitutive payments—it was when they already had a grievance 578• [783]
against a certain person and chose this way of expressing it. On each
such occasion there was not, among the Mbuti, the slightest thought
that the "witch" actually had anything to do with the death. On P
two occasions the accused was a woman singularly well equipped to [157]
appear as a witch, her face being almost entirely eaten away by yaws. [164]
She was actually extremely well liked, but nonetheless she belonged
to the volatile Cephu family who were always joining and breaking
away from the main band, and she was very loud in her comments
about that main band. Further, her husband, Aberi, normally also
well liked, was particularly quick-tempered and a disturbing element.

P

*177 He was the only one I ever knew who fought with his brother, and
761 his wife was the cause of that fight. (Aberi was also one of the three
754 to die following the curse of the Ngwana villager).

• 578 On another occasion the witch was also a woman, a rather crotchety, interfering old lady who was in the difficult position of being both a mother and a mother-in-law as well as a grandmother in the same camp. Her son, Amabosu, had exchanged sisters with Ekianga, and all of them lived in the same band. As Ekianga was an individualistic Mbuti with three wives, the situation was one fraught with difficulties, and old Sau's outspoken championship of her daughter as against Ekianga's two older wives did not help.

Sau was also the one chosen as witch in the mock trial after which the villagers attempted to detain her and the Mbuti carried her off with them to the forest.

P
[186] Evidently even in the village, regarded with suspicion and fear as it is, the Mbuti are not prepared to accept the real implications of witchcraft, so they see no need for the associated ceremonies. But they do sometimes make use of the villager institution to settle their own dissociated grievances in their own way.

C
765
THE VILLAGE *MOLIMO* MOURNING CEREMONY

602 The funerary rituals and the divination of the cause of death are only part of the village ceremony attendant upon death. There follows a period of mourning that varies in length according to the status of the deceased and the wealth of his survivors, and that is terminated by final cleansing ceremonies and a feast for all mourners who have stayed the course, which generally means the immediate patrikin. During the mourning period, the patrikin are obliged to perform cer-
C
tain ceremonies to protect the deceased and help him on his way to
765 join the ancestors. This ritual is known to the Bira by the name
192 *molimo*. When talking in KiNgwana they call it *essumba* or *ishumba*,
C although it is quite different from the Ngwana ceremony of that
[534] name. The Bira *molimo* involves the use of a "singing" pot called
[214] *tete*, which is used to create a noise in imitation of the clan totem
[825] of the deceased, and of the leopard who is respected by all Bira. Exact
P details of the ritual are not known. I was not allowed to attend village
C *molimo* ceremonies because my close association with the Mbuti in
[123] the forest was considered as evidence of antipathy, if not of hostility.
C
[776] But from a number of different sources which I investigated as thor-

			Male Members		Female Members	
621	Camp 3a – in	26 huts, there were	13 lin.	5 tot.	9 lin.	6 tot.
614	3b –	22	10	5	10	6
613	3c –	22	12	5	11	5

When the band fragmented into small camps, the picture was not far different:

		Male Members		Female Members	
Camp 3d – in	9 huts, there were	5 lin.	5 tot.	5 lin.	4 tot.
3e –	9	5	3	6	3
3f –	6	4	4	4	3
3g –	3	2	1	3	3

Apart from the totemic subdivisions of the Puemi and Bokelé, the lineages all intermarry freely and do not consider themselves related to each other in any way whatsoever other than as affines.

621 The camp plans (Plans 3a–g)[A] indicate the extent to which the
613 lineages maintained their separate identities in the above camps. If
361 we consider the lineages of both the husband and wife, we can see a
slight tendency for women to build the family huts so that men of
the same lineage will be near each other. The significance of this is
• [578] dubious, and the rest of camp life does not indicate lineage to be of
any particular interest, although in disputes lineage members tend to
support each other, but not necessarily.

[184] With other bands of net-hunters and also with archers the situation seems similar, though there is some tendency, perhaps, for the
lineage divisions to be more visible in archer camps (see Plans 4a–m).
621 I was not able to stay long enough in these other camps to thoroughly
114 verify the genealogies, however, or to observe what changes took place
from camp to camp. The material is all the more interesting, nethe-
[614] less, in that in the first instance I was always told that the camp consisted of one "clan" (using the village terminology), yet they did not deny the possibility of marriage within that unit.[4] This is another indication of how difficult are the conditions of work among the Mbuti, when they are constantly using words that have definite and very specific significance when used by the villagers, but which may have a completely general and other meaning among the Mbuti. The

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[4] "Clan" terminology is used freely by the Mbuti when talking to villagers. It is rarely used in the forest, and was used to me only in response to my genealogical inquiries.

[A] [see pages 340-345 -- Analyst]

social groupings within the camp. Plan 8[A] offers a dramatic example 621
of the kind of major change that can take place in any one camp, 361
and of the kind of change that may lead to ultimate fission, and that is certainly likely to determine one of the lines of cleavage when fission does take place. The change was brought about by the arrival of a controversial sometime member of the band, Cephu.[5]

The camp was already settled at optimum-to-maximum size when, 621
on the fifth day, Cephu arrived. He used to migrate from his natal 361
band to this one, and was not overly welcome in either. He arrived 578 •
by stealth with his father's brother's son, and their families pitched 614
their belongings in a small clearing near the main camp. They were [166]
joined by a member of the important Puemi clan of the main camp, whose wife was friendly with Cephu's womenfolk. Their camp established, they opened a trail leading directly into the main camp. The various reactions, seen in Plan 7, effected a consolidation of the southwest corner of the main camp and caused a rift between two sets of brothers: M and N (N having joined Cephu while M pointedly rebuilt a new hut in the main camp), and D and I, D setting up with Cephu, his brother I and nephew J refusing to leave the main camp and join him.

Even more important, the consolidation of the southwest and, to some extent, the southeast corner of the main camp involved the southward realignment of S, T and U, S and U being highly influential elders, T being one of the greatest hunters. T and U were members of one section of the dominant Puemi clan, the other section being localized in[B] the north part of the camp.

Plans 9 and 10[B] illustrate the rather more radical change that may 621
take place, effecting a temporary consolidation of lineages. Such 361
changes within a camp are extremely rare however—in this case the 613
consolidation was of the lineages concerned in a vital dispute against [578]
one of their members, the same controversial Cephu guilty of a serious hunting crime. Table 4 gives the relevant kinship structure for this particular camp, and Table 5 gives the complete list of lineages, as far as I could trace them, with indications as to which individuals were effective members of the Epulu band during the year.[C]

---

[5] I use personal names that were used in the forest, though some Mbuti use different names when in the village. It is perhaps significant that Cephu is a common name among the ill-considered Ngwana, and that Cephu's children were also mostly known by villager names or even by European names, such as "Teresa," currently in vogue among the villagers. Any one Mbuti might be known by as many as four names, certainly two or three. The names used here correspond to those used elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961) from which source some additional information on the personalities involved may be gleaned. [551]

A, B[see pages 358-359 respectively -- Analyst]

C[see pages 393 A-F; 326 -- Analyst]

entrance to his hut so that it no longer looked directly at Amabosu's, 361
which would have been taken as indicating extreme intimacy, but 621
instead faced narrowly across to the hut of his wife's uncle (C), 613
Masisi; Masisi's son's wife (D), who was not only kin to Ekianga's 593
young wife but close friends with her, promptly added to her hut, 595
despite her husband's protests, and faced it boldly toward Ekianga. Ekianga's young wife, Kamaikan, responded the next day by facing her hut in the direction of her friend, at the same time deflecting it away from her co-wife's hut, Arobanai (A), next door. Arobanai had on the day of her arrival made an addition facing toward Kamaikan as a conciliatory gesture, but in face of this rebuff she turned the entrance of her hut away again. Meanwhile Masisi's lineal cousin, Manyalibo, made no effort to enter the dispute, but rather turned slightly toward the rest of the camp. Masisi contented himself with completing the entrance to his hut on the second day, leaving it facing the way it was. An extension he built several days later, as did [881]
Ausu, was merely to provide separate accommodation for young girls
who were approaching puberty.

In the rest of the camp similar petty jealousies and hostilities 361
brought about similar clusterings. Njobo (W-1A), for instance, was 157
an unusually dominating personality, and was consequently accorded, 554
or took, the position of *capita*, representing the band in all matters 578
concerning the village. But he was unwise enough to try and assert 621
the same authority in the forest, and the over-all layout of the camp shows clearly how he and his sister's son, Asuku (W-3A), whom he favored, were ostracized. His wife Masamba (X) built my hut for me, [122]
as women sometimes do for adult bachelor kinsmen, to one side, and
another hut for strangers on the other side. Maipé (G), the son of another of Njobo's sisters, was the only one to allow his hut to remain facing toward Njobo. After Njobo had left, Nikiabo (H) joined the camp and Masamba built his hut for him, facing toward her own, saying she needed a friend. Makubasi (U), a prominent hunter and a member of the same clan as Njobo, but of a different lineage, turned his hut away on the second day, isolating Njobo in the middle of the clearing. At this, Njobo and his nephew, Asuku, joined their huts together, using only one entrance facing across to Njobo's other nephew, Maipé. When Makubasi's father, Tungana (T), arrived on the third day, he built his hut so that one entrance nominally faced toward Njobo, but it was generally covered and the other entrance faced clearly into the southwestern section of the camp.

361 Arriving on the same day as old Tungana came Moké, who built
342 a large rectangular hut (S) in the center of Tungana's section. The
62 two men claimed kinship with each other, Tungana allegedly having
[602] on his mother's side the same great-grandfather as Moké. Endeku,
who was a son-in-law of Moké, was also a renowned clown, and the
hut he built was wide open on two sides, so that it was little more
361 than a roof. It stood close to Moké's hut and was an effective link
621 between that cluster and the southern cluster, which included some
• 578 members of Cephu's sub-band. Endeku's hearth became a gathering
place for the southern part of the camp, just as the *kumamolimo* did
for the north. Njobo and Asuku were received politely at either, but
not with any enthusiasm. When Njelu and Betuli (M and L) arrived
on the second day and, because of their mutual affinal relationship,
built their huts close together, their neighbor Masimongo (K) turned
his hut away for no evident reason at all. Betuli reacted by turning his
back on Masimongo, joining his hut to Njelu's. One day later Njelu
built a new hut a few yards away, still facing it toward Betuli, however.
He said he did not like his "sister" so close to him. Actually,
[614] Betuli's wife was of the same clan as Njelu, but of a different lineage.
[613] Although Njelu's wife, kin of Pangia (P) and Betuli, had left him,
Njelu always preferred to move and camp with his affines, even
though they usually camped with Cephu, who was somewhat in conflict
with Njelu's own, Puemi clan. At the time the camp was built,
Cephu was not present, but most of the Cephu sub-band members
occupied the southern part of *apa* Lelo together. With them were
Kelemoké and Masalito (J and I), who were members of Cephu's
own lineage, but who preferred to camp with the main camp, whereas
Cephu usually made a sub-camp of his own.

When Cephu arrived, three days after the establishment of the
[487] main camp, he built a camp (Plan 8) of his own a short distance
away, then connected it to the main camp by a narrow trail. The trail
leading from the sub-camp to the village was closed after some protest,
as it effectively offered a second point of entry to the main camp
from the village, through Cephu's camp. In the same camp as Cephu
(FF) were two others—his kinsman, Masalito's older brother Abeli
(DD), and Njelu's older brother, Toko (BB), who moved from the
main camp the moment Cephu arrived. For some reason, at this
point, Njelu moved back to his old hut adjoining Betuli. It was only a
few yards further from Cephu's camp, but it was a significant few
[613] yards. Njelu and Toko had married two patrilineal cousins, so Toko's

wife was, like Pangia and Betuli, a member of the lineage that normally 361
associated with Cephu. Three days later, however, two more 621
female kinsmen of Toko arrived, also members of the rival Puemi/ 613
chimpanzee lineage, and they too joined Cephu's camp. The two 578
camps had effectively divided two sets of brothers, indicating much more sharply than the more subtle divisions within the main camp the extent to which lineage values may be counteracted and even superseded by other values.

In the following chapters we shall see more of the kind of petty disputes and hostilities that bring about this shifting of alliances, and the gradual fragmentation of a camp into distinct sections. It should suffice for the moment to have this one example of a single camp in a state of flux from the first day of its existence, and to know that this flux, whatever its cause, cut directly across unilineal descent groupings as conceived by the villagers.

Apart from the personal, unpredictable causes for constantly changing 621
alliances, there are other factors that can always be relied on to 574
introduce change into a camp, cutting across unilineal descent lines and causing further change in its balance. Visits from affines and to affines are one such factor; such visits sometimes become permanent, as can be seen in the composition of this particular band. Visits to neighboring villages may also affect the balance of its internal sections as, apart from the major co-operative activity of the hunt, there are other activities calling for co-operation of only a few people, and such smaller co-operative units almost invariably fall within the sections that divide the camp. If a section becomes depleted because [476]
some of its members have gone visiting, it may be forced to co-operate with another section in activities such as gathering, collecting firewood and building materials, repairing nets, and so forth.

Not having seen an archer *begbe* beat-hunt camp, which approximates 621
in size, as in hunting technique, to the normal net-hunting 184
camp, I can supply no material for comparison of the process of fragmentation. 224
The smaller, and for the archers more normal, camps are [114]
similar, however, and exhibit the same tendencies but with less emphasis. This may possibly be related to the fact that the smaller camps involve food-getting technologies that do not call for large-scale co-operation, but which demand the co-operation of two or three adults. Thus such divisions as may appear on the formation of such a camp tend to be rather more stable, and with the archers they are certainly

621 [224] more related to the demands of economic co-operation than to any
[184] other factor.

But however stable a camp may become after the initial fragmentation, that fragmentation is but an indication of the more systematic processes of fission or fusion that come into play each time a camp moves. Plan 11[1] gives the layouts of each camp built by the Epulu band for a period of over a year, and the cyclic process is quite clear. For the net-hunters a large camp is normally advantageous, although beyond a certain point a net-hunt becomes unwieldy. But once a
[621] year comes the honey season, when hunting is of secondary impor-
[622] tance, and it is more advantageous for the band to be split into two or more sub-camps, thus tapping the territory's honey resources more effectively.

361 The series of camp plans shown indicates how the process of frag-
621 mentation as observed at work within *apa* Lelo is continued and
578 sharpened with the building of each new camp. Sites are even chosen because they afford greater privacy between the various sections, thus minimizing any serious disputes that are in progress. Some interpersonal hostilities will persist, however, and it is these and not lineal relationships that are reflected in the final fission, when the camp divides into a number of independent camps, or sub-bands, each going its own way. If the dispute is serious, one or another sub-band may go off to another territory, and seek to join up with that band. This was in fact Cephu's situation. During the honey season he left the Epulu territory and went back to his home territory to claim his honey trees. But that territory was occupied by a large band where Cephu's hunting chances were no greater than those of anyone else, and this was not to Cephu's liking. Cephu tried to carve out a territory for himself, between his own band and the Epulu band, but he was always being forced by sheer economics to join the one or the other. He could never induce enough men to camp with him to set up an
[224] effective independent net-hunt. For this a minimum of seven is generally required, and Cephu could seldom raise above six.

So the monthly change of camp is an opportunity not only for a diplomatic rearrangement of the layout, minimizing latent hostilities, but it is also an opportunity for improving the economic strength of the band by either adding to it or subtracting from it.

[221] The honey season itself is a last opportunity for old hostilities to fade away, and the complete separation of the sub-bands into camps many miles apart generally resolves most sources of friction. If dis-

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[1] [see pages 392 A-D -- Analyst]

agreement persists, however, then when the honey season ends and 361 621
the band is forced to resume net-hunting, and therefore has to rejoin 598
its forces in the common interest of an effective net-hunt, one or 221
another of the dissident segments will join up with another band in
another territory. It is said that it would not stay within the same
territory and hunt there, even if it were numerically strong enough.

Thus we can say that the composition of each camp is ad hoc, responding 621
to the needs of the moment rather than to any preconceived 121
plan, or to any notion derived from tradition. The lines of
division are never the same; the reasons for division are nearly always
personal. The system does not lie here, then, but rather in the economy,
which favors a unified camp for the major part of the year and
a divided camp for a brief two months or so. The complete break and [221]
freedom of separate association allowed by the honey season (which
is also a particularly bountiful season as far as vegetable foods are
concerned) is, in fact, what makes practical this otherwise apparently
unsystematic flux. That the flux has a function we shall shortly see.

For the archers much the same process pertains. The economics 621
work in reverse, however, for the *begbe* season is made an occasion for 224
the entire band to gather together. Normally, throughout the year, 221
the band is divided into three or four small sub-bands, all within their 184
common territory. Tracking and ambushing and using the bow and arrow do not call for co-operation among more than two or three or four men. A large camp of, say, twenty-four men would then have at least six hunting parties setting off each day, and this would necessarily mean frequent changes of camp. A small camp, however, sending out two parties in opposite directions, can remain in the same area for a long time without scaring the game away. There are few occasions for members of different sub-bands to get together during this time, except for casual visits. Once a year the whole band unites, however, for the communal beat-hunt known as *begbe*. The mechanism for convening the whole band and the exact time of year this takes place, if there is a special time of year, are not clear either in the literature or from my own records. Each archer band I visited, however, assured me that it was near the honey season, and I suspect before the honey season.

However, the essential remains the same. Among the archers, as 621
among the net-hunters, there is a process of fission followed by fusion 121
—or perhaps, in the case of the archers, it would be better to say there [184]
is a process of fusion followed by fission. We now have to try and

582 stated and observed rule of incest, and although genealogical mem-
835 ories are short, never rising further than two above ego, it is adequate
611 in preventing the marriage of first cousins.[7] This seems to be about
the limit of the intended restriction, as at this level flirtation, accompanied by sexual intercourse, may take place with only nominal disapproval. The disapproval becomes more loudly voiced if the young couple seem to be forming too strong an affection for each other, such as would normally lead to marriage.

835 There is some expressed disapproval, of about the same degree of
[832] seriousness, if children of the same social mother, but not of the same
stomach, flirt with each other, but such flirtations happen.

I found it impossible to discover a single admitted instance of incest closer than between first cousins, but there is some evident restraint between brothers and sisters, none between mothers and sons, little
[578] between fathers and daughters. To swear at someone by accusing
them of having sex with their parent is mild; it is more serious to accuse them of having sex with their sibling of one stomach. Worst of all is to accuse someone of having sex with her or his spouse.
[755] (The degree of freedom between sons and mothers may be seen in the
[855] fact that a mother gives strength to her children, if they are ill, by
sleeping in the same bed with them. This is sometimes done between a mother and her adult son, so long as he is unmarried, without occasioning any comment.)

602 Together with this lack of emphasis on the biological aspects of
[601] kinship and the accompanying generational system of terminology
goes a lack of formal restrictions on behavior between different kin categories, and a marked unwillingness to clearly define kin relation-
[611] ships between individuals. One suspects at times that the apparent
shortness of genealogical memory is almost deliberate, for not only would such memory have no use, it would, in fact, undermine the whole delicate balance of social relationships among the Mbuti.

561
AGE GROUPS

601 Table 6[A] shows quite clearly the effective difference between the village system and the system of the Mbuti, granting that they both share the same terminology. The fact that among the Mbuti all mem-

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[582] [7] It is often stated generally that one marries nobody related through either the father's or the mother's line, but in special situations the restriction is narrowed down as given here.

[A] [see page 328 -- Analyst]

bers of each age level may be *apua'i* to each other doubly underlines 561
the importance of this age grouping as a structural principle of their 601
society, because it not only effectively allies members of the same age group, but it cuts across any unilineal descent pattern. Even though, if pressed, any one *apua'i* can and will trace his relationship to almost any other, through either cognatic or affinal lines, among themselves this is never done. The functions of the age group, also, have little to do with kinship.

The age group forms the next unit above the nuclear family, each 561
having its own functions and its own sphere of authority. Above the 621
age group one might consider the band to be divided into alliances 857
of age groups, though their function would be less easy to define. 883
However, such alliances do take place, generally in major disputes,
where youths and children might ally against hunters and elders. Char- [192]
acteristically, disputes concerning premarital sexual activity, betrothal [578]
and *bopi* (playground) activity are the major occasions for such al-
liances. But the same element may be seen at work during the reli- [765]
gious *molimo* festival, where the group of adult men that sing around a fire at night may divide the hearth into two or three fires. The unmarried youths nearly always have one fire for themselves around which they dance their erotic dances; the hunters (the younger married men) may have a fire of their own, or they may join the *mangesé*, the elders, men who are no longer as active in the hunt as they used to be.

621
Young married couples are held responsible for reproduction, but 594
only to a limited extent for the rearing and education of their chil- [561]
dren, for beyond the age of three or four a child becomes the responsi- [855]
bility of the band as a whole. As an economic unit the family is divided into the appropriate age groups as a co-operative part of the total band. Effectively much of its economic activity is directly for its own individual benefit, but there is nearly always some sharing even when there is no necessity for sharing, to emphasize the communal rights to forest produce. As a political unit the family only has internal jurisdiction of the most minimal kind. The punishment of a wife or a child, or the complaint of a child about its parents, quickly becomes a matter for communal discussion. As a religious unit the family is of little significance indeed. But every nuclear family is expected to participate in religious festivals, as symbolized when the *molimo* hearth is made up by taking embers from every family hearth, and when a camp is moved each family carefully takes an ember from

838 married men sleeping together. The two age groups do not mix, but
513 among themselves members of the same sex think nothing of sleeping
close to each other and deriving mild sexual satisfaction from the
physical contact. They state very carefully rules as to how to lie, with
legs thrown backwards around the other's legs, or even around his
hips or waist, and they say one may entwine legs while lying front to
front, though it is not considered good to hold each other too closely
with the arms. The thought of any sexual intercourse taking place,
• [578] however, is greeted with apparent horror, and homosexuality is never
alluded to except as a great insult, under the most dire provocation.
There is, however, a dance in which the sexes are effectively reversed,
and which is danced with the utmost humor, but the role of which
[535] I could never exactly determine. The dance, *ekokomea*, is dealt with
later in the context in which it occurs; namely, at the time of the
molimo festival.

837 If a considerable amount of sexual liberty is allowed the youths, a
834 fair amount is at least said to be taken by the younger married hunters.
I have not, however, been able to record a single instance of a
marital dispute involving the band that arose out of infidelity on
either side. There are few restrictions on sexual intercourse, though
the villagers state many on behalf of the Mbuti. The married hunters,
as do the youths, regard the hunt as an opportune time for activity
841 of this kind. At menstruation, which is a time when a village
[842] woman is under the strictest ritual prohibitions, the Mbuti attitude
is that it all depends on whether or not you want children, as this is
when conception is most likely to take place. There are those who
enjoy sex at this time, and those who find it distasteful. The only
restriction is that a wife should inform her husband, or a girl her boy
friend, that she is "with blood" so that he will know.

846 Immediately following childbirth is a rather vague period, some-
837 times stated as days, sometimes more grandiosely as years, when intercourse
is forbidden. Unfortunately I was able to follow up only on
three instances of childbirth, but in each of these the Mbuti fathers
did exactly what they said they would do; two of them refrained from
intercourse with their wives for about a year, during which time they
flirted with as many girls as they liked, and did not deny open gossip
846 that they were "sleeping around." This is the generally accepted pat-
853 tern, the reason being given that a woman can only feed one child at
a time, so she must not become pregnant again until her last child
is weaned. This may be from one to three years. If during that time

nuclear family often before the band—these are more the concern of 88
the elders. As we are here considering the normal run of daily life we 561
are leaving aside special occasions such as the *elima* and *molimo*
festivals, which are primarily religious in nature, but in which the
hunters and youths play their own distinct parts together with the
elders.

The hunters are generally in the middle of any dispute that occurs, 88
but in a serious dispute it is more likely to be an elder that will be 561
able to effect a settlement. It is, however, the disputes of the hunters 627
that establish the lines along which fission and fusion will take place, 554
and the elders have little influence over this process, nor do they even
seem to wish to influence it. They content themselves by using the
respect that is accorded them to maintain some kind of balance between the band factions. It is the hunters who initiate both fission and
fusion, and who are thus responsible for the composition of the band.
Relationships with neighboring bands and with the villagers, insofar
as they are determined by band movement, are also largely in their
hands, and in this sense the hunters may be considered the political
leaders of the band. In this the women are almost, if not fully, the [562]
equals of the men.

The hunter's life is the most active and arduous, and this may in 888
part be responsible for his somewhat disputatious nature. In elderhood there is a chance to relax. There is no shame in an elder having [157]
his children bring him back food, and in any case he may be needed
to keep an eye on the camp while the hunt is away. It is an age group
to which a man or a woman resigns himself with some reluctance, but
in which he soon finds considerable satisfaction. He is able to intervene in disputes without fear of physical violence, for one thing, and 888
often does so with enjoyment. The elder is undoubtedly the arbiter, 627
though by no means the only source of solution. From his position 578
of immunity he is able to interfere in the most private and domestic
affairs of anyone. Whereas a hunter solves his problems empirically,
answering facts with facts, the elder solves those that face him with
considered opinion, drawing from a lifetime of experience. A hunter [885]
would be laughed at if he could not support an opinion with fact. An
elder is never expected to do so, and is consequently admirably fitted
to deal with moral and spiritual matters. It is, however, opinion that
he offers, not judgment. He will concern himself in questions of the
upbringing of children, of their puberty and of their marriage. At any
time of major crisis the elder will play the resolving part, though the

888 hunter may initiate the action. Thus the *elima* and the *molimo*, which
627 are crisis festivals, are initiated by the hunters, but it is the elders who
• 578 control them and give them their spiritual quality. It is the elders who
[881] act not only as arbiters between the members of the band, but between
[765] the band and the forest, between this life and the next. Even
in the most ordinary run of everyday life there is seldom a day that
does not demand from one elder or another, man or woman, some
opinion that will be couched in terms like "such and such is good for
(or pleasing to) the forest," or "this makes my spirit (*roho*) feel
good."

621 The greatest departures from daily life occur when the band visits
*177 the village, or when a villager visits the band. In either case it is as
512 though the whole social structure of the Mbuti were suddenly
changed. A single individual becomes, all at once, a chief. Age groups
break up and nuclear families come to the fore. The only central fire
will be that of the "chief." But as this is not part of the forest world,
exceptions occur within the forest context only rarely. There is seldom
621 any disaster such as the invasion of a camp by elephant, though
731 it happens sometimes. Hunting is generally more than adequate
512 throughout the year. But though hunger does sometimes come to the
Mbuti, starvation is unknown. Sickness is not uncommon, but is
rarely serious. Throughout the year daily life goes its usual way interrupted
only by major, inevitable crises of the life cycle.

844 BIRTH

Birth is the first crisis of life, and among the Mbuti it is, as elsewhere,
[165] not without its attendant dangers. Though no statistics are
available, it is the opinion of villagers and Mbuti, and of many Europeans,
doctors and otherwise, who know both communities, that
infant mortality is appreciably less among the Mbuti, and sterility
[164] less common. This may be due to the fact that their relative isolation
has defended the Mbuti against the venereal diseases widespread
among the villagers. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the
Mbuti evidently feel less need for concern at childbirth. This applies
844 to both the nuclear family and to the band. There is absolutely no
621 formal recognition on the part of the band, and only the barest of
interest. Considering the fluid and nonlineal composition of the band
this is not surprising, particularly since, for this type of band, birth
is only one form of recruitment, and by no means the most sure or

881
561 quite so with the girls. But by the end of the festival bonds have been
571 forged between the *bamelima* that will never be broken and that will
866 provide a firm basis for co-operative activity throughout their lives.
182

The other thing achieved is that there seems to be at least a temporary
881 obliteration of the bonds of the nuclear family. The nuclear
594 family has no particular responsibility toward the festival, though
836 they will generally contribute more food than others and may offer
182 shelter, and it has absolutely no authority. Further, although relations
between brother and sister are free at all times, it is worth noting that
in the *elima* house the girls sleep with the boys of their choice openly
and without shame, though their own brothers may be among the
boys sleeping with other girls beside them. It is difficult, however, to
determine whether or not sexual intercourse, which is permissible at
this time, openly takes place under such conditions. I am told that it
does.

881 Neither do kinship considerations seem to play any important role,
602 and certainly no predetermined role, in the instruction of the girls.
The only roles that are distinguishable as such are the provider of the
elima hut, the mother of the *elima*, the father of the *elima*, the assistants
and the rest of the *bamelima*.

881 Of these, the *bamelima* are without question an age group with no
561 kinship considerations. The assistants are primarily close friends and
571 confidantes of the *elima* girls, and seem likely to be related distantly,
602 but there are no stated preferences concerning this. It is said that the
• [578] father of the *elima* does not have to be a relative at all; his job is to
use force, if necessary, to stop the somewhat violent altercations that
break out among the attendant youths or between them and the
bamelima. It is said that the mother of the *elima* is usually an elderly
relative of the parental or grandparental level, and that the provider
of the hut can be anyone willing to put up with the noise. Table 7a
shows the kin relationship between these various roles and the *elima*
girls in an *elima* held among the Epulu Mbuti at the end of 1957 and
into the beginning of 1958. It also shows the relationship of those
senior girls who took the most prominent part in the instruction of
the *bamelima*. Tables 7b–d show the same relationships on three
other occasions among other net-hunting bands.

881 Instruction, as already mentioned, is in song, and in such of the
86 arts of motherhood as are yet unknown to the girls. The instructors,
[561] apart from the mother of the *elima*, are senior members of the same
generation as the *bamelima*, and mostly married, or else they are el-

though he expected as much. Rather more serious is a medicine called, 224
in the Epulu district, *anjo.* It is a paste made from the heart, brain 789
and eyes, sometimes from other parts as well, of some highly prized 825
game. The paste is charred and placed inside the horn of that animal, which is then inverted and stuck in the ground, usually near the family hearth. The paste is put on the body, most often the forehead, of the hunter and of members of his family. Sometimes it is even offered to privileged friends. It is believed to convey to the hunter the senses of the animal so that he will be able to deceive the animal as
well as foresee his movements. However, the use of this individual [577]
magic is considered antisocial in many bands, particularly if it appears to be attended by success at the cost of others in the band. It [578]
may cause disputes, and then generally all such medicine is collected and burned.

By far the most significant magico-religious acts connected with 224
the hunt are more of the order of religion than of magic. One is the 533
hunting song (with or without dance), and the other is the hunting 535
fire. The song or the dance may precede or follow a hunt. It is distinct 789
from any other form of song or dance. The song form is rather complex and demands co-operation in a manner comparable to that demanded in the hunt itself. The dance is suggestively imitative of a successful hunt, but is by no means mere mime. Like the song form, the choreography is quite distinct, and is not used in any other context.

The hunting fire in the southern part of the net-hunting area takes 224
the form of a fire lit near the trail just before the hunt sets out in the 372
morning. It is generally lit by youths, always at the base of a young 789
tree. When blazing it is covered with leaves, so the heavy smoke is given off. Men and women, as they pass by the fire on their way to
the hunt, may stop to gossip, or they may pay no attention. I have [778]
not seen or heard of any accompanying ritual or invocation, the only explanation ever stated being that the fire is to rejoice the forest, and it would seem to have the same primary purpose as song and dance, that of attracting the attention of the forest. It is certainly believed that the fire will insure the protection of the Mbuti and help toward success in the hunt.

Further north, another form of hunting fire is used, associated with [184]
rather more ritual. There the net-hunters build the fire within the camp, whereas in the south it is always just outside. The fire is sur-

224 482 of the youths will put it across his shoulders and take it back to the camp, or it will be divided on the spot. Such division, however, is not considered final, and further sharing may be demanded on return to the camp if the hunt was not fully rewarding.

224 The system of sharing is nowhere the same, and the frequent interchange of visitors between hunting bands renders sharing even more complex. Each band, however, will state certain rules, and will not hesitate to override them in order to bring about the recognized goal—equitable distribution of the spoils, with special consideration for the owner of the successful net and for anyone who contributed to the kill by using or lending his spear, and so forth. Elders and children are allocated certain parts of each animal, and this helps to insure that these nonhunters are cared for adequately, though their friends and kin will always provide them with more if needed. If the hunt is so successful that game falls into every net, then there will be no sharing, though there may be exchange simply for the sake of preferences of taste.

224 578 152 626 This is not to say that sharing takes place without any dispute or acrimony. On the contrary, the arguments that ensue when the hunt returns to camp are frequently long and loud, and appear to be almost deliberately sought. One such example is when someone will invoke the rules of sharing of another band, where perhaps she or he may have a relative. Indeed it is remarkably seldom that the Mbuti will admit to having had a completely successful hunt. As a result, the return of the hunters is the inevitable signal for personal grievances, however far out of context, to be aired and expressed in terms of sharing rights. There is no formal settlement of the dispute, but invariably there is a compromise and there will be an exchange, at least, if not a sharing. This is undoubtedly an important outlet for petty hostilities and jealousies, which are automatically kept well within bounds by the very fact that, whatever the nature of the original dispute, it is
[476] made to relate to the hunt. No dispute can be allowed to threaten the co-operative pattern of the hunt, for subsistence depends completely upon the continuation of such close co-operation. This is of course particularly true among the net-hunters, whose hunting technology demands larger bands and closer and more constant co-operation between band members.

000 Following is an example of different rules for the distribution of game:

222 and since the forest is benevolent the songs thus are thought to secure
533 protection. In point of fact they do, for the throaty chorus of
789 even two or three Mbuti women is enough to scare away any game.
[778] When not singing the women beat their hands together, shout or talk
[776] loudly to each other, for the same purpose. I know of only one woman
injured while gathering. She was alone, which was the first mistake,
and the first question asked when news came back to camp that she
had been attacked by a buffalo was the apparently surprising one,
"Was she not singing?" She was not, nor was she "talking to the
forest," and that was her second mistake, the consequence of which
was death. The Mbuti are practical enough to recognize the "noise"
value of song, but they see more in it than that.

262 When the Mbuti are near a source of plantation foods and can
acquire them by one means or another, then their daily diet is largely
vegetable. The meal taken before going hunting and the snack on the
hunt are both likely to be entirely vegetarian, meat being eaten only
at the evening meal. Even then it may be served with one or another
[222] vegetable. Even when the Mbuti are far away from a supply of village
foods and living entirely on the forest they still rely heavily on vegetable
foods, and gathering must be considered at least equally important
with hunting as a subsistence activity. From what I was able to see,
this is true among the archers as well as among the net-hunters. It is
also true that throughout the forest the supply of forest vegetable
foods, though varying, is constant and sufficient, frequently ample. If
there is any time when there is a greater abundance than at other
times, it is during the honey season.

HONEY

221
222 Falling approximately in the middle of our calendar year, and lasting
a full two months, the honey season is of vital importance to the
Mbuti not only from a nutritional point of view but structurally.
[621] We have already seen how at this time the net-hunting bands split up
[578] into minimal sections, separating hostile or factious elements and
consolidating existing friendships, so that when the band re-forms it
will have resolved most of the internal dissensions built up over the
previous year, on the whole reaffirming old loyalties but always asserting
some that are new. The archer band, normally segmented, joins
together during the honey season in what is essentially the same
process. It is significant that the honey season should be marked

554 band to the village as its *capita* or *sultani*. In the Epulu band, Njobo
157 was an undisputed great hunter, knew the territory as well as anyone
554 and had killed four elephants single-handed. He was a good enough
157 Mbuti not to attempt to dominate any hunting discussion in the
156 forest, merely to take a normal part. If he ever appeared to be overly
571 aggressive or insistent he was shouted down and ridiculed, although
highly popular. He was also the one chosen to represent the band to
• [578] the villagers. Ekianga, on the other hand, was less generally popular
and was the source of some friction, having three wives (onc the sister of another prominent member of the band), but he was a fine hunter, endowed with exceptional physical stamina, and he too knew the territory well. Even at the height of his unpopularity he was one of the most effective "leaders" of the hunt. So was Nikiabo, a youth who had achieved some notoriety by killing a buffalo when barely out of childhood. Although a bachelor, he had a net of his own and took a prominent part in all hunting discussions. Makubasi, a young married hunter, was also accorded special respect because of his hunting prowess and his physical strength, combined with his knowledge of the territory. But while these four can be singled out as exceptional, they could either separately or together be outvoted by the rest of the hunters. On such occasions they were compelled either to give their assent to the popular decision or to refrain from joining the hunt that day. None of them had the slightest authority over any others. Nor was any moral pressure brought to bear in influencing a decision through personal considerations or respect. The only such moral con-
621 sideration ever mentioned was that when the band arrived at a de-
571 cision, it was considered "good," and that it would "please the forest."
778 Anyone not associating himself with the decision was, then, likely to
displease the forest, and this was considered "bad." Any individual intent on strengthening his own argument might appeal to the forest on grounds that his point of view was "good" and "pleasing"; only the ultimate general decision, however, would determine the validity of his claim.

Finally, it has to be pointed out that while the forest is appealed to almost as an arbiter, and is considered as imposing the standards and even the leadership, which all Mbuti follow, this only holds good in the forest, where the forest directly "feeds its children." Once in the
[183] village, actions concerning the village are never judged by whether or
not they are pleasing to the forest; a totally different set of values
* [177] pertains.

When Njobo was away from the band for a 156
number of months with his son, these two nephews moved in. Normally 604
they were not resident. Asuku brought not only his wife but 592
also his father. He insisted on Njobo's wife looking after them, building
their hut and so forth. Although Asuku was not liked, he would [554]
have been tolerated had he not tried to assume the status of Njobo, [571]
but this assumption moved him into an age group to which he did not [561]
belong, and he was consequently always being shouted down.

On one such occasion, Asuku was annoyed at the hunt for not 156
leaving as soon as he would have liked. He strode up and down, telling 152
everyone that they were lazy. When they shouted him down, he 578
told them he was Njobo's son, so "I *am* Njobo, and this is Njobo's 554
camp." When he was ignored he then turned from one great hunter to the other, and they all ignored him except one, who placed a stick on the ground at Asuku's feet and said, "There is a stick; if you are so big, pick it up and hit me." Asuku then turned to the elders, and Moké, the most influential of all, laughed in his face. At this, Asuku entered his hut and stayed inside for the whole day until dark.

On another occasion Asuku tried to say that his net was Njobo's 156
net, and he was therefore entitled to Njobo's position in the hunt 554
and should not be out on the fringes. He had chosen a time when 422
his mother, Njobo's sister, was visiting, and the hunters did not want 578
to make a dispute of the matter in front of her, out of respect for Njobo. However, one of them, Njobo's paternal cousin Manyalibo, went up to Asuku and said that if Asuku wanted that position it would mean setting his net next to him, and if that happened he
would set up his net alone rather than stay in the hunt. This temporarily 156
checked Asuku, and that evening old Moké gathered the 554
senior hunters around him and, for once not smiling, he raised his 558
arm and pointed across the camp to Asuku. This is considered a grave 627
indictment, and the whole camp fell silent. Moké, very quietly, and 201
talking as if only to the hunters but never lowering his arm or taking his eyes off Asuku, said, "That is a completely bad man. I have been watching and I have seen with my eyes, and my spirit [*roho*] makes me speak. He makes noise all the time, and he is the cause of all the noise in the camp. I would like to throw him out forever. But he is a relative of Njobo, and we should wait and see—and watch. That person is a child and has no right to share conversation with men. He is not of us. He comes from far off. I don't like people from far off. They are bad for any camp; they kill any camp completely." He then changed his attention and pointed at Ekianga, the other hunter of

156

554 renown, the man with a troublesome trio of wives, himself a frequent
558 cause of friction in the camp. Shaking his finger at Ekianga, Moké
627 said, "And that is a man, completely clean. He pleases my spirit
201 [*roho*] very much."

After the evening meal Moké stood in the middle of the camp and pointed to the hearth of each great hunter and male elder in turn, naming them, and saying, "This is my man, this is my hearth, for it is his hearth; but it is not Asuku's." He even pointed over to Cephu's camp, and included Cephu. He then went back to his hut, leaving Asuku at the central fire with two elders.

Despite this display of disaffection, however, Asuku remained on. He had not only been pointed at, but named in public, and another had been named as good while he had been named as bad—a double disgrace. Ridicule, after this, was pointless, and although everyone wanted to be rid of Asuku, their respect for Njobo, coupled with Njobo's continued absence, prevented them from doing more than ignoring the offender as far as possible. After some three months,
156 however, Asuku began to frequent the village for long periods. Al-
627 though this meant he was at least not in the camp, which was thereby
621 much improved, the hunters found this the ultimate insult and dis-
648 loyalty. When he refused a summons to return to the hunting camp,
554 old Moké once again stood in midcamp, an honored position from which any Mbuti, young or old, is free to claim the attention of everyone. He said that since now Asuku had become a villager, he was no longer an Mbuti, no longer "ours"; he belonged far away, very far away indeed. Pointing to the central fire in the section of the camp that included Njobo's wife and three great hunters, and divers others both related and unrelated, he said, "This is a matter of the forest. This is our hearth. It is Njobo's hearth. It is not Asuku's hearth. He belongs in the village or completely and absolutely far away."

158 There were murmurs of assent from everyone, and Moké looked
627 around to each individual hearth, asking, "Is my spirit [*roho*] right?"
Agreement was unanimous, though subdued, and Moké simply said,
"*Asi-to*"—"It is finished." The next day word was sent by a youth to
[202] Asuku's father, in the territory of Effundi Somali, a few miles on the far side of the Epulu. I was told that the youth simply gave a verbatim account of what had happened. Asuku never returned to the Epulu band, and left the village, returning to his father's territory.

156 His cousin, Mbaaka, was not such a stranger in the band, but soon
554 after his marriage, and some six months after the Asuku episode, he
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began more and more frequently to talk from midcamp. Like Asuku, 554
he complained about laziness and bad hunting, common enough 578 •
complaints but seldom aired from midcamp. When he began to claim 156
special attention by virtue of being Njobo's "son," however, he was 554
promptly ridiculed. People stopped listening to him, even from midcamp, 578
and dared him to name them—a procedure that commands 558
attention. Even unmarried youths called out, "Your noise will kill us 152
all," and children began to imitate his whining voice. Masisi, a cousin [626]
of Njobo and, with Manyalibo, about to move from the status of
hunter to that of elder, took Mbaaka aside at one point and talked to
him quietly, recalling what had happened to Asuku.

Seeing that Mbaaka at last had begun to listen to reason, his 152
brother, who up till then had never interfered, made a loud and rude 156
joke that brought the whole camp down with laughter, then said, 626
"Everyone is crazy—I'm going to sleep," and promptly went to sleep. 522
Masisi then returned to midcamp with Mbaaka and said that if anyone 554
else tried to be funny he would turn himself into a villager and
bewitch everyone. A youth took up the thread and said that the village
was responsible for all the noise anyway, because his girl friend
never listened to him any more and was a bad cook (a typical
pygmaean non sequitur). This rather forced good humor persisted
throughout the next day, with the women telling jokes and laughing
loudly the moment the conversation drifted in the direction of
Mbaaka's former complaints. There were a few more remarks to the
effect that the village was indeed responsible for all the noise, and the
rest of Mbaaka's stay (two further months) was unmarred by any
repeated claims to privilege through kinship to Njobo.

It is plain, then, that while any movement toward individual authority, 554
conscious or otherwise, is sharply countered, and while individual 626
authority is virtually nil, there is nonetheless a clear basic
framework to support the values of the hunting band. There is the
division of leadership, according to field, throughout the entire band,
yet there is the midcamp site from which anyone may harangue all
present. Although he has no means of compelling attention, it is generally
accorded, and may be further compelled by pointing to or naming
the individuals concerned. Further it is plain that the elders, including 554
those hunters whose position is being gradually taken over 627
by their children, act as final arbitrators, always careful to stress that [561]
what they say is a matter of their opinion, or of their heart. Only [778]
when unanimity is beyond question is an opinion or an action con-

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627 sidered "pleasing to the forest." Asuku had placed himself, physically
[778] and morally, beyond the forest.
[156] In the two instances cited so far, although the kin relationship of
602 Asuku and Mbaaka to Njobo was the source of their claim to special
604 privileges, this was recognized as a village attitude, and a valid vil-
554 lage argument. It is noteworthy that the details of the relationship
were never spelled out once, except by Asuku and Mbaaka. The at-
titude of all the Mbuti was one of respect for Njobo, but of equal
recognition of all those who shared the same central hearth, includ-
ing some who were not even affines. It was stated very clearly by Moké
[621] that though Asuku was a member of the band by virtue of having
shared the same hearth, he had no more privileges than anyone else
of that hearth, and was under the same obligations of respect and
responsibility to his elders.

554 There was one other elder who could claim the same respect as
602 Moké, by reason of age, and that was Tungana. But Moké had the
added advantages of being a widower and virtually unrelated to any-
[608] one in the band. He claimed fictitious relationship with Tungana, it
being said that the same foster mother fed them both, and he fre-
quently gave Tungana's "clan" name as being his own. Clan names
[614] were seldom mentioned in disputes, except in a village context, and
even then they in fact referred to a unit that was either nonlineal or
cognatic, and not confined to one clan. Rather than differentiate be-
[621] tween lineal units, the Mbuti used the concept of the hearth (*kuma*).
[354] Each family had its own hearth, but there were also several central
hearths, each shared by a number of families.

602 Each camp, except the smallest, was distinguished by several such
621 central hearths, effectively breaking the camp into subcamps that
[354] usually revealed a line of fission or fusion, but which frequently ran
counter to all kinship considerations. As far as the Epulu band was
concerned (and I believe this to be true of many other bands), au-
thority was again, as with other aspects of life, more associated with
age and territory than with kinship. Each section of the camp was,
621 in a limited sense, a political unit, and sometimes disputes would
● 578 remain confined to one section without spreading to others. A man
626 could invoke kinship or friendship to go to the aid of a disputant in
another section, if he wished, but somebody like Moké was even
more free to wander wherever he liked. The rules of self-help among
[152] the Mbuti are quite simple. It is perfectly proper to hit someone with
anything wooden; it is not at all proper to draw blood, nor to hit any-

one on the forehead, which is considered a dangerous spot. In the 621
frequent marital disputes, any man who hits his wife on the head or 578
in the face promptly loses any sympathy he might have had from his 626 [593]
fellows. A dispute that follows such lines almost invariably ends
with an elder, male or female, physically interposing himself between [522]
the disputants, who then revert to hurling abuse which becomes more and more exaggerated until it is so humorous that even they join in the laughter. Alternatively they may lapse into a sulk, which will last for the rest of the day and through the evening, but will be gone in ample time for the next day's hunt to take place as though nothing had happened.

If a dispute becomes widened in scope, however (and this is gen- 578
erally achieved by one of the disputants naming someone, either in 621
his own support or as a supporter of his antagonist), it will ultimately 626
involve the entire subsection of the camp, and quite possibly the whole camp. In either case the process is the same. Whatever the cause of the dispute, it is still regarded as essentially the concern of the individuals concerned. Rather than attempt a probably impossible reconciliation of the excited participants, the rest of the band joins in an effort to divert attention away from the actual cause of the dispute. If this fails, they attempt to dissipate the blame by raising all sorts of minor but associated disputes, so that a number of people become involved. If blame still seems inescapable, the camp [522]
clown is likely to try and take it on himself, or else it will be put upon him by the others. The disputants, in my experience, accept this device as a genuine solution. There is no attempt whatsoever, nor have I heard of it in other bands, to make any restitution other than verbal.

As already mentioned, a dispute may be stopped simply by making life intolerable for the disputants by miming them and throwing them into ridicule. If these measures fail and the dispute persists, the hunting automatically suffers, and if no reconciliation is effected, the band splits, either forming two subsections or remaining as a single band, with the splinter section joining another band, at least temporarily.

Not only is the attachment of blame avoided or dissipated as rig- 627
orously as possible, and restitution largely ignored, but punishment is almost completely unknown. There are one or two instances where a youth might be thrashed by communal decision, but they are rare and foreign to Mbuti nature. Closer to an indigenous system of pun-

627 [765] **Closer to an indigenous system of punishment** is the morning rampage of the youths' section of the *molimo* society. Disguised behind leafy branches they charge through the camp with the *molimo* trumpet on their shoulders, and attack the huts of any truly recalcitrant offenders. Even then, as a token of the responsibility of the entire camp, the youths attack *every* hut to some extent, taking a token leaf from every hut. And still in keeping with the notion of dissipating the blame, they are likely to give the worst beating to the hut of the disputant who is least to blame.

681 There are two threats that form the ultimate sanctions against
684 the most serious offenses. One is the threat of ostracism, for such
crimes as incest, and this is spoken of as leaving the matter to the
forest. Ostracism means refusing membership in the band. If one
band does this, other bands are likely to follow suit, and the offender
688 will be left alone in the forest, and alone he will die. The other threat
765 is the direct threat of death, but this is reserved among the Epulu
533 Mbuti and other net-hunting bands uniquely for the crime of failure
on the part of an adult male to sing (a crime sometimes conversely
described as sleeping) during the *molimo* festival. The sacred singing
takes place late at night, and its efficacy depends on participation of
all the men and youths. It is said that anyone found sleeping (the
only conceivable reason for not singing) would be killed with two
spears in the stomach and buried beneath the *molimo* hearth. The
women would simply be told he had gone away, or been taken by a
leopard, and he would never be referred to again.

627 578 The different ways of dealing with a dispute depend so much upon the context rather than upon the precise nature of the dispute that the legal process can best be illustrated by citing a number of cases. It will immediately be apparent that in the vast majority of instances there was no visible conclusion to the disputes at all; they evaporated as quickly as they arose. There were few instances where anything resembling a general opinion was expressed, and even fewer where any positive action was taken. The cases that follow, then, are classified according to the most common causes of dispute. Of such causes food and sex are by far the most common. Territorial disputes are confined to married couples with different territorial affiliations, but whereas food disputes are also largely found among the young (married) hunters, they are by no means always marital, but often between unrelated hunters or their wives, and occasionally among youths. Disputes concerning sex involve both the young married couples and youths, as do the everyday disputes over apparently

meaningless trivia. Such disputes I have put in a class by themselves, 627
though wherever a deeper underlying dispute was known to have lain 578 •
behind an apparently trivial dispute, it has been classified accordingly.

DISPUTES CONCERNING FOOD

1. A mortar was borrowed by Njobo's sister, Teningbengé, from 252
Amaloku, Amabosu's wife. There is no kin relationship. Tening- 152
bengé's subsequent cooking did not please her son (Maipé, actually 578
her nephew), who complained that the mortar must have been dirty.
Amaloku, who by then had retrieved the mortar, said that on the contrary it was the food put into the mortar that was dirty, and not the mortar itself. Maipé promptly seized a log of wood and started fighting with Amabosu. Amaloku and Teningbengé fought with sticks. Amabosu's mother, Sau, joined the fight, against her daughter-in-law's
oldest sister, old Asofalinda. The dispute remained thus confined and [626]
was watched with much enthusiasm and laughter by the rest of the camp until Ekianga, brother to Amaloku and Asofalinda, stepped in and stopped the fighting by seizing the sticks and logs and throwing them away. Everyone returned to his hut and continued the evening meal.

2. Masisi, a great hunter, complained that the hunting was bad 224
and said the band should move to the village and eat there. His 578
cousin, Manyalibo, moved to midcamp and began a tirade against Masisi and everyone else for always complaining there was not enough food. He cited ten antelope caught that morning as evidence of the good hunting, and said that everyone should be happy and should be making the forest happy by singing, with so much food. And if they wanted more food they should hunt more and make the hunt even better. He said that if Masisi's noise continued he was going to leave.

Moké then took his place and quietly told everyone that nobody 224
should leave for anywhere, that nobody could deny that the hunt was 626
reasonably good, and that therefore the forest was pleased. If they [578]
moved or made too much noise it would be displeased. The forest
would be happy if the whole band were to set out the next day on [821]
the biggest hunt of all. Then when the weather was better (it had [152]
been raining for some days, always a cause of discontent and dis- [166]
comfort) and nobody was making a noise, the whole band could move [648]
wherever it liked (knowing that in such a mood it would move fur-

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626 ther away from the village, and thus further away from a source of
[821] friction).
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[166] There was no singing, but it was done as Moké suggested. Mur-
[648] murs of assent came from all over camp, with both Masisi and
Manyalibo agreeing loudly.

578 3. Particularly at the beginning of the honey season, when ten-
621 dencies to fission are already well marked, disputes over food, par-
221 ticularly over hunger attributable to poor hunting, are made occasions
for enlarging the rift between the camp segments. Thus one day old
578 Tungana's younger son, named after his distant relative Njobo, came
593 flying back from the hunt in hot pursuit of his wife, Nakoranja.
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221 Nakoranja, much to everyone's surprise, had lost her bark cloth and
621 was holding a leaf in front of her private parts, occasionally removing
it to emphasize her cry of "I am naked!"

Having made her point she disappeared into her hut and modestly continued her description as to how her husband had torn her bark cloth off to shame her because she wanted to join her "sister" (who was a member of another segment), Ekianga's youngest wife. Young
[224] Njobo, standing outside the hut, told the camp that his wife was
useless on the hunt, that she could not run as fast as even the slowest animal and let them all escape. Now they had no food and they would be hungry all day. Evidently she could not run as fast as her husband either, for he had caught her and given her a sound beating, ripping off her bark cloth when she tried to escape. He did not deny this, and Nakoranja said that this entitled her to pack up and leave.

578 Evidently this was something that had been brewing for some
593 time, and when the hunt came back and it was seen that the dispute
621 was forming along the line of fission, Tungana intervened and said
166 that there was no sense in everyone making so much noise, that the
next day he and his wife were going to leave for the village, and that young Njobo and Nakoranja were coming with them to look after them. The discussion immediately turned to the dangers of the trail, with the two segments siding with each other in common and equally insincere but polite opposition to Tungana's suggestion.

621 4. At a later stage, when fission became inevitable, discontent being
626 so high that the sections were not uniting in the hunt and therefore
not getting any meat, old Moké intervened. He stood in midcamp and harangued each section in turn, facing it and naming its mem-
[221] bers. He emphasized that this was the honey season and that hunting
should be stopped anyway, and everyone go to the forest in search of **their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that."**

their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that." But Moké did 621
an unusual thing. He said it was all right for the camp to split, but 626
it would displease the forest if it split badly, and it *was* splitting badly ("*apa ndaso aké sinana*"). Tungana had gone to the village; Masisi, siding with Tungana but not wanting to join him, was planning to go east, Ekianga to the north; Cephu was going to leave the territory altogether; and Manyalibo's head "walked without sense" (said in KiNgwana: "*kichwa yaké a na tembela wazi-wazi*") and he didn't know where he was going. This was all bad. For this was one camp, it was Kolongo's.

Kolongo had been dead some three years, and the names of the 621
dead are rarely mentioned. The whole camp fell silent, and very qui- 626
etly Moké recounted the history of the friendship between Kolongo 829
and Njobo, and how they used to hunt together and kill lots of ele- 769
phant and catch lots of antelope and how they always had full stomachs. "Kolongo never allowed noise, Njobo never allowed noise. Now there is nothing but noise, and we are hungry. Kolongo is dead, but that person there, Ekianga [Kolongo's younger brother] that person is now Kolongo. Njobo is not here, but that person and that person [Manyalibo and Masisi were indicated but not named] are Njobo. Let us all go our own ways and get lots of honey and sing honey songs and dance honey dances, then come back to one camp as before and hunt again."

The immediate bickering was stopped, and everyone agreed loudly 621
that Moké was indeed right. But as it turned out Manyalibo made 602
Moké's speech an excuse for siding with Ekianga in a hunting-honey 571
camp, and a deep rift opened up between the hitherto inseparable 578
cousins, Manyalibo and Masisi. Moké threw his lot in with Ekianga, in an effort to dissuade them from any grosser sacrilege, with exhortations to Masisi to make a good camp and gather lots of honey. Ekianga's eldest sister, her daughter, and Njobo's wife and some of his nephews and nieces joined Masisi, as did a young married nephew of Cephu, Kelemoké. Others joined Tungana, who prudently moved close to the village, where he could, by virtue of his age, claim gifts of food from all the sections and from his village *kpara*.

5. During the honey season, with the band divided into four sec- 621
tions, Masisi and Manyalibo were again at odds. Manyalibo, with 221
Ekianga and Moké and old Tungana, among others, formed a power- 224
ful section at the far northern extreme of the territory, and offended 578
Masisi's much smaller section by continuing to hunt. Masisi argued

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that this was not customary during the honey season, and was displeasing to the forest. He also added that as his section was too small to hunt, Manyalibo was under an obligation to send him a share of all the meat caught by his part of the band. At the same time he set about trying to encourage the usually unwanted Cephu to join him, and swell his section to an economic hunting size. Cephu, always unpredictable, refused, though he agreed to send three nets as a token of goodwill. He never did. These communications were made through a series of visits made by Kelemoké, Cephu's nephew, between the three sections. The fourth section was in the village, and did not enter the dispute.

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Two neighboring bands, hearing[2] that (a) the Epulu territory was exceptionally well endowed with honey that year, and that (b) Masisi was looking for reinforcement, took advantage of the situation to trespass judicially in the southeastern extreme of the territory, well away from all the others. Their overtures, made in the one instance by a meeting on neutral ground, and in the other by a personal visit to Masisi's camp by Herafu, a distant affine, were coldly rejected, and they were told to leave the territory or there would be war. In each case they responded that the territory was not Masisi's, and that in any case they had rights to the territory through affinal ties. They added that in view of the surplus of honey Masisi was offending the forest by trying to steal it all for himself. [222] [778]

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This put Masisi very much in the wrong. He then raised an issue, long known, to divert attention from himself. He pointed out to his own section that Manyalibo's camp had a drying rack in it, sure indication that he was trading with the village. This was a major crime, and two youths went to investigate. They found it indeed to be so, and without much argument Manyalibo offered them food to take back to Masisi. After a great deal of further argument, and threats by the youths that they would tell the rest of the villagers of what appeared to be a secret alliance between two of their members and Manyalibo's section, the youths were allowed to take all the meat they could see, and Manyalibo promised to send a net to his "brother" so he could hunt for himself. Two days later he did this. Attracted by the meat, Cephu sent two of his section to join Masisi, and eventually joined himself. The rift between Masisi and Manyalibo, however, remained, and they did not re-form in the same camp again that

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[203] [2] News of this kind travels between bands via the villages, and through the constant exchange of visits between cognates and friends.

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year. While Manyalibo's crime was serious enough, desecrating the 224 621
forest in the honey season by hunting for the villagers, Masisi's was 578
equally, if not more, serious, in his attitude to the trespassing bands. [688]
The night before Cephu joined him, Masisi was made the subject 227
of discussion, from the middle of his own camp, by several youths 621
and young hunters. They all asserted the right of their in-laws to 628
enter their own territory, to hunt or gather honey, whether they were 578
wanted or not. They agreed that permission should have been asked [626]
first, but that in light of the surplus of honey in the forest it was
hardly necessary. The discussion ended by everyone agreeing that all [186]
the noise[8] of the past weeks was plainly the fault of the villagers who
wanted the meat that caused the rift to begin with. This decision was 222
followed by a plea from Masisi for much singing to make the forest 533
happy again. The honey songs were immediately taken up with renewed 626
vigor, and Masisi was prominent in maintaining them right to
the end of the honey season.

6. Largely through preoccupation with Cephu, Manyalibo and 626
Herafu, with the Effundi Somali band and now yet another trespassing 578
band from the neighboring Eboyo territory, Masisi's camp had 222
several days with little honey and little food of any kind. All men in 152
the group took turns in stating their complaints from midcamp, each 621
promising to find out who was responsible and threatening to name them. On the fourth successive day of such "noise," the singing having deteriorated, much to the disgust of the youths and the women, Masisi was particularly irritable and began a long harangue about how bad the whole thing was, including his present camp, and saying that he could name those who were responsible for it all being bad, but instead he was going to name those who must go out the next day and collect lots of honey and make it well again. He then named all the hunters. But he continued arguing and, getting more and more irate, began to imply that those he had just named were in fact those responsible. There were growing murmurs of protest, which only excited Masisi further, and there would almost certainly have been a
fight had it not been for the intervention of the youths and the young [534]
women. Two of the women and one youth seized the *ngbengbe*, [533]

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[8] "Noise" is a direct translation of the word *akami* in the local dialect of KiBira, or [192]
kelelé in KiNgwana. It is used in ordinary parlance, but always with an unfavorable connotation. It is given special significance by adding the comment that noise is bad [778]
(*sinana*). This is tantamount to a moral judgment, invoking the supernatural sanctions of the forest, for noise is also said to kill the forest (*akami a mu ndura*), just as it is said to kill the hunt (*akami a mu mukira*).

626 621 wooden clappers used only for the accompaniment of honey songs,
578 and started clapping them vigorously while singing. Masisi found the
222 competition too strong, shrugged his shoulders, chased the women
152 away and, taking a pair of *ngbengbe* himself, joined in the singing.

[533] [534] The next day the men and the older youths went honey gathering
[431] and brought back enough honey to send some as a gift to Cephu.

7. Laziness is highly criticized among the Mbuti, and is always re-
157 lated to hunger. It is one of the few qualities (noisy hunting is an-
461 other, "blindness" in the honey season a third) that is countered by
536 public assertion, in mime, dance and song, of the opposite value.
[261] One morning, shortly after dawn, there were murmurings of discon-
[789] tent because of the dampness of the forest, and suggestions that there was enough food in camp to allow for a day without hunting. One of the older hunter's wives stalked out into the center of the camp and began an elaborate wordless mime, showing that she was not going to be lazy and stay behind and play and dance "empty" games and dances. She was going to take her husband's spear and go off and hunt (she reenacted a successful hunt) and return with lots of food and share it all around and make her *roho* good and make the forest happy. Then when *she* sang and danced, it would not be empty.

It was a good show, and the whole camp looked on and laughed, then went hunting.

224 8. One morning, at the beginning of the honey season, a number
461 of hunters set out, as usual, at scattered intervals. Several seemed to
626 be staying behind, so I also remained. After about half an hour the
578 hunters returned, one by one throwing their nets on the ground in the center of the camp. When they were all back, a bachelor youth who had gone with them began a tirade against the hunters who had stayed behind. Hearing his voice, and wondering why he was taking such a prominent part in a hunting issue, women began sleepily coming out of their huts. It was evident that too many had decided to stay home, and the hunt had not had enough beaters. The youth, Pepei, not only criticized the women as lazy animals for not coming on the hunt but also criticized the rest of the hunters, pointing out they had been even too lazy to send their sons with their nets, and had left people like himself, an orphaned youth, to do the work of men.

The hunters had nothing to say, but the women responded vigorously that they were not going to carry nets and spears for the men, they had work of their own to do, and that if enough youths had

gone there would have been enough beaters. As usual the women 224
were loud in their complaint, and two of the hunters who had stayed 461
behind with their nets now joined the side of Pepei and said that they 626
had not gone because the women made so much noise, all the game 578
was scared away and the hunt would have been empty anyway. Even
Cephu had meat (a highly dramatic statement, for Cephu was usually
meatless, or considered so), and the neighboring Lesé pygmies had
meat, and everyone knew what poor hunters they were. But we were
all starving because everyone was lazy.

The discussion went on for about an hour, it being made an excuse
to raise all manner of minor sources of discontent. The hunt did not [535]
go off again, but in the afternoon there was a big hunting dance, and [482]
the next day the women made a special show of setting out, carrying
their husbands' nets and spears, at least until they were out of the
camp.

9. While many of the disputes concerning food arise out of general 578
shortage or dissatisfaction, usually owing to poor hunting, and [261]
are made occasion for bringing up almost any topic, they are more
often made occasion for criticizing specific groups. Thus children will [857]
find themselves criticized for making too much noise in their playground,
or for splashing too loudly in the stream and so frightening
the game away. Youths are accused of idling and playing with girls on [883]
the fringes of the hunt instead of guarding the edges against escaping
game. Women are blamed for being lazy or inefficient as beaters, men
for relying too much on women "who have other work to do." Elders
are blamed for not keeping the camp quiet while the hunt is away,
and always the whole camp is blamed for causing poor hunting by not
singing and dancing properly.

There are innumerable petty squabbles over division of food, but 626
these are always settled by those concerned. Never once have I seen 578
such a squabble become an affair for the whole band to discuss. The 224
only cases of disputes concerning food that have centered around
specific individuals, and have not been mere expressions of marital
disharmony, have concerned hunting "crimes." These are few and far
between, and rather than accuse someone of being a poor hunter it is
more often just pointed out that his net is always empty. There was
one occasion, however, on which Cephu set his net up inside the
hunting circle, therefore in a better position to catch the game being
driven in by the beaters. A full description of this is given elsewhere
(Turnbull, 1961, Chapter 5). Its essentials are as follows:

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• 578 Cephu was neither a very good nor a very popular hunter, and it may
224 be that he was afforded less cooperation by his fellow hunters as a
626 result. Toward the end of a particularly unsuccessful day, Cephu
627 slipped off and set his net up where it would catch the first wave of
224 animals put up by the beat. He was caught with his spoils, however,
578 and when back in camp there was a gathering of all the youths and
hunters and elders (except Moké) at the *kumamolimo* (hearth of the *molimo*), to which Cephu was summoned by calling his name across to the small camp he had built for himself. He was named in the most uncomplimentary terms, and when he finally came to defend himself he was subjected to indignities, even by the youths and children. He was openly accused of stealing food from his fellow Mbuti, and this was something only animals did (note that the anger was of the band at someone having stolen from the band; this to the Mbuti is true theft). All manner of other grievances were brought up
[765] against Cephu, particularly his lack of participation in the *molimo*
for Balekimito, Ekianga's mother, paternal aunt to Manyalibo and Masisi. Cephu responded that Balekimito was not his mother, and this was the trap into which he had been led. By saying this he disclaimed membership of the hearth, and so his theft became more logical but his act even more reprehensible. Finding himself now both a thief and an outsider, Cephu broke down and offered to return all the meat he had caught. The hunters went with him and stripped not only his hut but those of the three other families in Cephu's camp, leaving Cephu complaining that he would die.

That evening, however, Masisi slipped over in the dark with a peace offering of cooked food[4] and not long afterward Cephu made his way to the *kumamolimo* and joined in the singing for his "mother," Balekimito. This was one of the very rare occasions when a dispute was ended by what might be considered as direct retributive and punitive action by the band.

685 10. This is not to say that theft of food never takes place. It would
157 be a rare Mbuti woman who did not conceal a portion of the catch
[224] in case she was forced to share with others, and occasionally a bache-
lor like Pepei, with a reputation for being somewhat *wazi-wazi*, was caught stealing a small quantity of food from a cooking pot or from

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[431] [4] Prestation is an important though unformalized part of Mbuti life, and a major
means of establishing social relationships. Any property except the most personal items,
[182] such as used bark cloth, bows and spears, are likely to change hands, and even these
personal items may be offered or sought.

someone's hut.[5] The woman would be roundly criticized, and maybe 685
named. Pepei was either ridiculed or caught by other youths and given 157
a mild thrashing with a thorny branch. But that did not stop Pepei,
and at one time he was becoming such a nuisance that there was
considerable discussion as to how to deal with him.

One morning a leg of meat was found missing from a rack where it 685
had been smoked in readiness for a visit to the village. The owner of 157
the rack had been one of Pepei's most outspoken critics, Makubasi, 578 •
a son of old Tungana. Pepei, incidentally, was a discriminating thief, [251]
and he was generally tolerated because his thefts frequently operated [627]
as unofficial sanctions against people who had incurred public disapproval
for some reason or another. However, Makubasi was a highly [554]
respected member of the band, and Pepei had overstepped himself
by committing a theft that could not be construed as a mark of disapproval
of some mild misdemeanor on someone else's part, but that
was plainly an act of personal vengeance. Instead of thrashing him, [627]
Makubasi simply pulled down his meat rack, tumbling it into the fire
below and burning it along with what was left of the meat. It was
a dramatic gesture, and although his wife was seen to sneak some of
the meat out of the fire before it was consumed, it was an effective
move.

Makubasi's mother collected all the meat she and Tungana had, 685
brought it over and threw it on the ground in front of Pepei's house, 627
saying it was a gift for animals and insects, and for Pepei to eat it if 578
he wanted. This was too much for Pepei, who started crying and [152]
saying how terrible it was to be an orphan. Everyone ignored him
and for the rest of the day not a word was spoken to him. The meat
lay rotting outside his hut, where it remained until consumed by animals
and insects.

That evening, again at dark, a peace offering of cooked food was 627
brought to Pepei by Sau, the old "witch" from whom he most frequently 431
stole. Thus did Sau, like Masisi, restore harmony and *ekimi*
(quiet) to the camp.

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[5] The acknowledgment of theft as a crime might well be taken in support of Nippold's 685
(1954) contention that, together with other hunters and gatherers, the African 157
pygmies, and the Mbuti in particular, have a highly developed sense of private property. 421
It is a debatable point, and largely a semantic problem, and if labored too much only [114]
obscures the essential structural fact that regardless of the extent to which property is
"privately" owned (and if it is, where are any corresponding patterns, let alone laws,
of inheritance?), the obligation to share is an important recognized value, recognized in
practice (cf., constant reciprocal prestations). There is frequent show of reluctance, but

754 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters
• 578 with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch,
a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two
ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a
handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation
the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's
histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a
[535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she
did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing
[224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to
run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but
Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided
with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and
Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that
Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the
incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give
Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting
as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad
578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too seriously,
522 Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flapping
626 his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by
the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp[6] and said what a
683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further
678 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the
571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between
608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty
[186] francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news
caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were
626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I
683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any
incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

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[685] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., indi-
[427] vidual) theft.

[6] The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the
[621] person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he
talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly
[156] the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a
vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the *molimo*.

sion, during which any latent dispute might be aired. I could not 626
definitely trace any heightening of reciprocal prestations between the 683
individuals concerned, but it could have taken place in divers ways without my knowing it.

12. A number of disputes arising over food indicate trivial domes- 593
tic disagreements, and seldom reach major proportions. A wife is 578 •
late in cooking her husband's food, or cooks it badly; he spills some 152
precious oil or fails to catch any game on the hunt. Such disagreements are confined almost entirely ~~to~~ the younger married couples, and they usually settle them by beating each other. If the beating gets too severe then the older women intervene, slapping both boys and girls soundly. If a marital dispute is more serious it may still emerge through a trivial incident in the hopes that it will be settled peacefully. If it is ignored, or mistaken as another petty squabble, then a more serious incident has to be created.

Baumbao, Tungana's eldest son, was having trouble with his wife, 593
Tabakali. She was frequently away, back with her parents, and was 578
suspected of having innumerable liaisons with other men. Baumbao 152
said that this was particularly bad because of the *molimo* that was 765
going on at the time. She had changed her hearth when she married [787]
him, and was now a member of this hearth, and she had to contribute to the *molimo*. He first brought the issue up simply by accusing her of cooking badly, and slapping her so hard that an old widow intervened, hitting Baumbao on the back with a burning log. Then everyone agreed that Tabakali was indeed a bad cook but that Baumbao knew that when he married her.

Baumbao took drastic measures. He took down the baskets full of offerings to the *molimo* from the *molimo* hearth, uprooted the sticks and the vine marking the site, and threw the lot onto the ground. While doing this he was busily saying that the *molimo* was empty.
He said he had dreamed that his dead sister, Beselinda (naming her), 765
had appeared to him in a dream and told him it was time someone 593
made a good *molimo* trumpet and stopped using drainpipes.[7] She 578
told him to make one and, having made it, to use it and then keep it [787]
carefully and not let it rot. He had done this and had been supplying [534]

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[7] As described elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961), the Mbuti on one occasion made use of [177]*
some metal drainpiping they found in the local administrative center. Recognizing its musical potentialities, they stole two lengths and used them as *molimo* trumpets. Everyone agreed that the main thing was that the sound was undeniably good, but the more conservative elements strongly felt the lack of the identity between the conventional trumpet (made of a forest wood) and the forest itself.

765 the food for the festivities, but nobody was helping him. At this
593 point, instead of naming his wife, he named another sister, living in
• 578 the same camp, and said that she had not done her part. He added, as an afterthought, that his own wife was equally responsible, and stepped down.

765 Moké took his place and began a long harangue, telling the camp
626 that the *molimo* was nothing to play with, that it was big and it was
593 dangerous, and it could kill you. He pointed out that there had been no singing for two days and two nights, because of rain, and that indeed the *molimo* had become empty. The men should have built a hut for the *molimo*. But even so it was bad for Baumbao to take down the baskets. These should have been kept full; an empty *molimo* basket is bad for the forest. Moké then turned to Baumbao and said, "Your wife is one of us, she belongs to this hearth; it is for you to see that she keeps the basket full." Baumbao then stalked off in a temper, and Eyalo, his sister's husband, said that Baumbao never dreamed of anything but his wife's bad cooking and the whole *molimo* was empty and he was not going to contribute to an empty *molimo*, nor was his wife.

Moké replied, "Empty or not empty, that is the *molimo* hearth and it has to be looked after as long as it is there." He left, and a number of youths began to restore the sticks that had held the baskets, and then carried the baskets around from hut to hut, collecting offerings from each one. That night there was some singing, and for the next few nights. Then the festival was brought to an end. It was noticeable, however, that Tabakali was constantly being helped by her youngest sister-in-law both in collecting food for the *molimo* basket, and in cooking it.

834 DISPUTES CONCERNING SEX

578 13. There is a great deal of latitude in any Mbuti band on the sexual behavior of its members, but there are certain things that are known to cause offense. One is the playing with the private parts of a woman in front of her kin or her husband. One morning the camp clown, Matungi, was playing in this manner with Kengé's half sister, married to Kokoyo and mother of two children. Kengé was nearby and took great offense, and said that if Matungi wanted to play with the girl elsewhere that was all right, but not in front of her brother. Matungi replied by becoming even more intimate, whereupon

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Kengé called out loudly that the only kind of person who would do 578
that was one whose mother's private parts were smelly.

Matungi leapt into the center of the camp and challenged Kengé to
a fight. Kengé refused, until called a coward. He and Matungi then
each raised one foot against the other, and grappled. At this point
the older men intervened and pulled them apart. By then it was time
to go hunting, and the incident was forgotten.

14. Two of the most popular people in the band were Moké and 589
Mayuma. The one was a widower, the other a widow. Mayuma wanted 581
desperately to marry Moké, and as fond as he was of her, he equally
desperately wanted to remain single. He had reared one family, he
said, and had grandchildren, and that was enough. He wanted quiet,
and women were noise.

But everyone else thought it would be a good match, and they
plotted to help Mayuma. They tried to shame Moké into sleeping
with her, at least, by getting her to ask him publicly to do just that.
Moké refused.

Shortly afterward Mayuma became ill, and Moké was blamed. It 589
was recalled by Mayuma's kin that after her husband had died, Moké 581
had slept with her and offered her marriage. Now his refusal to fulfill 753
that promise had brought about her illness.

Moké sat and listened, then restated his reasons for not wanting
to marry Mayuma, but said that nonetheless he was very fond of her
and would help to feed her and make her well. This was accepted, but [577]
it was still considered that thwarted love is a very bad thing, and nobody
should deliberately mislead another in such matters.

15. Sexual relations between unmarried youngsters are counte- 836
nanced happily unless they approach the rather hazy realm of incest,
or unless they create a disturbance. Parents were constantly complaining
of the noise their children made while engaged upon amorous
expeditions; they preferred being able to turn a deaf ear. One youth
went too far when he called out from inside his girl friend's hut to the
group outside (which included her parents), and begged them to continue
singing because "it is so sweet to [make love] to song, just like
in the *elima* hut." His phrase for lovemaking was somewhat intimately [578]
descriptive, and brought cries of protest and his immediate ejection
from the hut.

There are numerous other examples where parents become en- 836
raged simply at having their attention forced. Manyalibo's daughter, 578
Mebapepé, was courted by all and sundry, and it was not this that

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578 upset her father so much as all the accompanying noise. In particular he was irate when waked up by a suitor crawling over him in the middle of the night to get at his daughter. In this instance he gave chase, and woke the whole camp up with a harangue from midcamp. The accused's reply was effective—that if he had made noise and wakened Manyalibo, it was not as bad as Manyalibo's noise, which had awakened the whole camp for nothing.

16. By and large all that the parents can complain about in the sexual life of their children is the noise. If the noise becomes too much, however, it then becomes a matter for the band.

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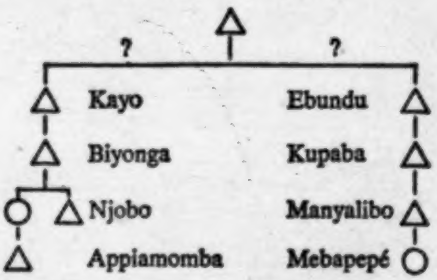
61 Such a matter became the affair between Appiamomba, nephew of Njobo, and Mebapepé, Manyalibo's flighty daughter. The situation was aggravated by the relationship between the two lovers, Appiamomba's mother being descended in the male line from the allegedly same great-grandfather as Manyalibo. When accused of being of the same clan (using the village term) as Mebapepé, Appiamomba denied it and said they shared different hearths. He was then asked, "You cannot deny your mother was a Mupuemi; then so are you."[8] However, his argument about being of a different hearth carried weight, the more so as Njobo was not at this time in the same section of the camp as Manyalibo, and had not been for nearly a year.

One night Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya, chased Appiamomba away and called on the other youths to beat the offender. The others demanded what offense had been committed; there had been no noise. This was the beginning of a major argument which quickly spread all over the camp. Manyalibo went to the midcamp site and said, "Appiamomba is my child and he does not listen to me. Mebapepé is my child and she does not listen. My children are sleeping together and this is bad, for they are making noise all the



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[8] An example of a common confusion concerning lineal descent among the Mbuti.

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time. They sleep together every night. Why do they not make up their 578 •
minds and get married? Then Madyadya can have Appiamomba's 835
sister for wife and there will be no more noise." 61

The next day the issue was taken up by the elders, who gathered together and called on Appiamomba and Mebapepé to say what they wanted. The question of relationship was quickly dismissed by Tungana saying that nobody knew whether Kayo and Ebundu were brothers or not; who was alive to know, so what did it matter? It was "completely far away." The only question remaining was one of intent, and all the elders agreed that the children had been troubling their parents and spoiling the hunt with their noise, and that they must make up their minds and either get married or stop playing around. Appiamomba seemed unsure and said he would ask Mebapepé in his own time. Mebapepé, under pressure, denied that she loved Appiamomba and said she did not want to marry him at all,
or indeed have anything else to do with him. She burst into tears and [152]
ran to a friend's house.

This relieved the tension somewhat, but Tungana brought up the 578
fact that there were far too many young people around who should be 579
married, and he started naming them. Each in turn began to state his 152
case, but various jealousies quickly came to the surface, and fighting 883
broke out among the youths and their girl friends. Tungana and Moké [582]
shrugged their shoulders and retired to their huts, sitting outside and watching with interest. The parents mostly left the scene completely, Manyalibo loudly complaining that the noise would kill him completely. Ekianga remained and tried to restore order, but quickly became involved himself. He shouted for Kengé to get a stick and beat some of the youths away. Kengé shouted back, "Later," and ran to join the other uninvolved youths on a hillock, to get a better view.

By evening the fight had ended, and everyone was too exhausted 578
to renew any discussion. Moké and Tungana suggested it might be 833
good to break camp and go and visit the village for a few days. Kengé 834
said he thought this was an excellent idea, for then all the girls could 177*
sleep with the village men and that would keep them quiet for a time.
He diverted the conversation to a discussion of village sex techniques, [829]
and the camp quickly regained its good humor. The next day half the band left for the village, the rest going further off into the forest. Without exception, the five young couples in question were divided by this move, though nobody referred to the fact.

17. A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a 000

A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a
837 627 villager. On returning to the hunting camp the first youth she met (Pepei, totally unrelated) beat her up severely, throwing her to the ground, holding her by one arm and kicking her. Nobody intervened, even her parents, and not a word was said about the incident.

833 That evening Pepei complained to the camp that no girls would sleep with him because he was an orphan, but when he began to make allusions indicating that this was one reason why he beat up the girl, Moké broke in and said that the only reason girls didn't sleep with Pepei was that he was so old. He was about nineteen.

832 837 578 18. It is seldom that within a camp a girl will go after one of the married men as blatantly as did Biyokenama, one of Tungana's daughters. Moreover, Biyokenama's father was distantly related to Masisi, the father of her lover, Ageronga. One morning she went so far as to follow Ageronga down to the section of the stream where the men bathed, taking off her cloth as she went. Ageronga's wife, Ambelema, a husky maiden, went in pursuit, hurling abuse. Biyokenama was heard yelling that Ambelema had no business suggesting such dreadful things; how could anyone think that she, Biyo, would flirt with her "brother"? But Ambelema had seen enough and began
[579] fighting. Tough as she was, she lost three teeth and came running back to the camp in tears. Biyokenama prudently took off for the village.

837 626 [683] Everyone waited for Ageronga, who eventually came wandering in and went up to Biyokenama's mother and said he wanted three hundred francs, one for each tooth her daughter had taken from his wife. He said Biyokenama followed him without reason, that he wanted nothing to do with her, that she was a nuisance. Nobody believed this, but it was clearly a statement of loyalty, and sympathy swung to his side. It was agreed, in a discussion in which mainly youths took part, that Ambelema should not have said such dreadful things to Biyokenama, that even if true they were better not said; but the blame was more firmly placed on Biyokenama, and her mother was urged to take better care of her in future.

593 578 19. Marital disputes that are overheard but not deliberately forced on the attention of the band are ignored for the most part. If they are noisy and keep people awake, there may be complaints or there may be some ridicule. Certainly a fight going on between husband and wife inside a hut is followed with zest by all the youths and some of the younger married couples. These may even stand around watching

the hut shake, ready to catch whoever comes flying out first and prevent further damage. 593 578

Sometimes after such a squabble the young man and wife will equally loudly make up, so that everyone can hear, and will then emerge from the hut hand in hand and walk up and down the camp in ostentatious amity. This is considered a very good thing.

The custom of sister exchange, and the lack of any system of patrilocal residence, however, lead to conflicts of loyalties, and brothers or sisters find themselves drawn into disputes that are not strictly theirs. Ekianga was the cause of one such situation that continued for months, manifesting itself in a whole series of apparently unrelated disputes. 595 578 [582] [591]

He had three wives, the youngest of which, Kamaikan, was the sister of Amabosu. Amabosu's wife, Amaloku, was in turn Ekianga's sister. Kamaikan was not only the youngest of the wives but by far the prettiest, and Ekianga ignored his marital obligations to the other two wives, even to the point of retaining favored portions of the game for Kamaikan. And only with Kamaikan would he sleep.

The other two wives responded in different ways. The oldest, Arobanai, ostentatiously built her own house and did nothing for Ekianga's. She said she was finished with her husband; if he wouldn't sleep with her she would sleep with his child. She phrased this in a way that made it sound rather incestuous as a form of insult, but everyone agreed that it was good for her to keep herself and her children out of Ekianga's hut. [626]

Loku, the middle wife, had no children, and she retaliated simply by occasionally going off to join another band and letting it be known that she was available for temporary liaisons, owing to her husband's incapacity. This again was a blow at Ekianga's vital spot, his pride. But still he slept on with Kamaikan. [837]

When Kamaikan became pregnant, Loku and Arobanai both rejoined Ekianga, thinking this was surely their chance. But when a boy was born, Ekianga still showed no signs of changing his ways. Arobanai brought her complaint to the band by striding up and down the camp listing all her grievances against her husband, one after the other. Moké came out and agreed that it was bad but that it was something that should be settled by them, and not made an issue for everyone else. But Amabosu now felt he had to intervene, and he sided with Arobanai, saying that Ekianga was doing a bad and dangerous thing continuing to sleep with Kamaikan. Everyone agreed 595 578 626

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626 834 Everyone agreed that after giving birth a woman should be left alone for a while, and
846 that her belly should not become big again until her child became big.

595 One of the many fights that occurred because of this relationship
593 is described in *The Forest People* (Turnbull, 1961), at the end of
578 Chapter 6. There it is seen that Amabosu sided with his sister, and
626 consequently shared what everyone agreed was at least partly her guilt. Arobanai and Amabosu's mother, Sau, were the two who intervened to stop the fight when it began to get beyond bounds.

Amabosu, who intervened to help his sister, now found himself associated with her in her obstinate disregard of public opinion, so he ignored her and contented himself with continuing, from time to time, to make uncomplimentary remarks about her husband. This created a strain between Amabosu and his wife, Ekianga's sister, and while Sau became the protectress of her daughter-in-law, Arobanai became the protectress of her young co-wife.

One night Arobanai grumbled loud and long throughout the small hours until, about an hour before dawn, she came out into midcamp and woke everyone up with a torrent of abuse that was delivered with such vigor and evident sincerity that men came tumbling out of their huts holding their spears, ready for a large-scale fight. Arobanai had named just about everyone in the camp for some kind of offense,
[201] all of which contributed, she said, to Ekianga's delinquency. To emphasize her points she clapped her hands each time and pointed.
[522] Masisi tried to quiet her down by imitating her and laughing at her, but all but a few were too sleepy to see much humor in the situation, and when he saw he was not achieving anything he abruptly told Arobanai to "close her teeth" and then walked away. Ekianga came out of his hut and also quietly tried to pacify his irate wife, but was equally unsuccessful. Others tried similarly and made equally little impression. Sleep was impossible, and everyone sat around huddled over their family hearth, cold and miserable, listening to the still undiminished flow of invective. Occasionally a finely turned phrase brought some nervous laughter, but on the whole Arobanai was not going after dramatic effect, she was merely cataloguing all the disturbances of the past few months and laying them at her husband's door. After over an hour of nonstop tirade Arobanai began to wind up her argument with an indictment of both Kamaikan and Amabosu. Kamaikan could have resisted Ekianga's attentions, she said, and she added that she had resisted them often enough herself. But Kamaikan

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had either given in or had actually encouraged Ekianga, and Amabosu 578 626
had supported her. This brought a mild cry of protest from 593
Amabosu, and hearing it Arobanai rounded on him and asked him
whether or not he was an Mbuti, for he had not behaved like one.
What did it matter whether he was out of the same stomach as Kamaikan [601]
or not, were they not all *apud'i* (the term of friendship that
covers brothers, sisters and age mates)? And was it not more important
whether something was right or wrong than whose stomach
who came from?

Finding this an unexpectedly dramatic declaration, and one which made Moké visibly sit up, and almost certainly feeling somewhat fatigued, Arobanai suddenly stopped and brightly said that she was going to get some sleep, the rest could do as they pleased. As she strode into her hut Moké came over and stirred at the central fire. Not addressing anyone in particular he said that this thing had gone on long enough, and that he did not want to hear another word about
it. He said that if disputes continued they would kill the camp completely [778]
and absolutely, that the forest would refuse to accept the [224]
band and would send all its hunts back empty. And what Ekianga did [843]
was a matter for him to think about, for if he continued sleeping
with Kamaikan it would almost certainly kill their child, and that
would again displease the forest. He ended by saying, still staring carefully [778]
at the fire, "It is no longer a matter for us, it is a matter for the
forest."

20. A month or so later Kamaikan's young son became ill. Arobanai 755
was not in the camp at the time, but Loku was. Nobody mentioned 595
Moké's warning that the boy would become ill if Ekianga continued 578
sleeping with Kamaikan (as he did), and Amabosu was shouted down 304
when he appeared about to say something to this effect. He changed [843]
his mind and went over to Loku, and said that she was to blame; [754]
she would have to cure the child by cicatrizing it. In the village this is tantamount to an accusation of sorcery, cicatrization being an admission of unknowing guilt by which the accused at the same time absolves himself and does all that is possible to negate the curse. The Mbuti know the belief and the custom, and sometimes, as in a case like this, they follow the custom without following the belief. Loku put up the expected resistance to the idea, and Amabosu chased her with a stick. The youths and hunters followed the show with enjoyment, and Manyalibo made jokes about nobody daring to come near him because he was the biggest sorcerer of all. Eventually Loku

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595 feigned to run into a tree and fall unconscious. She was carried into
• 578 Cephu's hut, where she stayed until the next day. Then, in a very
304 matter-of-fact way, she emerged, went over to Ekianga's hut and picked up the sick boy. In front of the few who cared to look she made a few incisions with an arrow tip. The boy seemed better, and Loku happily played with him. Ekianga came and inquired how her head was where she hit the tree, and persuaded her to go and lie down. They disappeared into the hut together and that settled the matter. Manyalibo pointed to the hut and observed that it was shaking somewhat. "Sorcery, indeed!" was his comment as he turned his back to go into his own hut.

595 Ekianga settled down, from then onward dividing his attentions equally among his three wives, though seldom again was there a camp when all three were with him at the same time.

578 DISPUTES CONCERNING TERRITORY

[593] 21. There were only four such disputes that I recorded during an entire year, all of them slight and apparently indicative of marital disagreements; that is, excluding discussions as to whether or not to break camp and go to the village, a stock suggestion and a good arguing point whenever another issue turns up that is better avoided.
578 Once, however, when such a suggestion was seriously made and the
621 general opinion seemed to be that it was time for a move to the vil-
166 lage, an elderly widow, Nakwanji, came out of her hut and harangued
854 the band from midcamp. She said that a child had been born in that camp and that the child was well. Its food was there, in that camp and in that part of the forest, and it should not be taken from its food. Everyone agreed except Tungana, who said perhaps they could compromise and go halfway to the village and make a new camp there. Nakwanji was insistent and said no, this was the child's forest and this was where it must stay as long as it remained well and happy.

621 22. During the big rift in the honey season, Moké was up in the
593 northern part of the territory with Ekianga and Manyalibo. Isa, his
578 son, and Isa's wife, Pikenasona, were at Masisi's camp staying with
602 Njobo's wife. Partly because of the noise Masisi made every evening, and partly because he wanted to be with his father, Isa kept insisting that Pikenasona leave and journey with him to the north. His wife, Njobo's niece, and therefore much at home in Masisi's camp, refused to go. Asofalinda, Ekianga's sister, told Isa it would be bad to go, as it

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is bad to split a camp because of blood. Usually the metaphor of 593
"stomach" is used in such cases to express kinship, but it was plain 578 •
that this was what Asofalinda meant. 602

Masisi joined in and said that all members of a camp were of one hearth, regardless of stomach, and they belonged to the hearth; so Isa belonged to this hearth and his father to that. Until the next move of camps that was how it should be. Isa capitulated and continued to stay on.

23 and 24. Mbaaka fell from a tree and broke his arm. While in- 593
capacitated in this way, his recently acquired wife took off to join
Cephu, who had invited a number of his Lesé-speaking in-laws to
hunt in the western borders of the Epulu territory. When Mbaaka
was well enough he went to Cephu's camp and brought her back. On
arrival back in the camp, he threw her to the ground and said he
had brought back rubbish, and he didn't know why. His wife got up 593
and sat down in the door of the hut, upright and rigid, in a posture 516
widely used by Mbuti women to show their utmost displeasure. Mbaaka told her to get his supper but she ignored him. His pleas and threats fell on deaf ears, and even when he slapped her once she barely moved. Masisi's wife eventually brought over some food and put it down between them. Mbaaka offered some to his wife but she pretended not to see it, so in a burst of temper he ate all he could and threw the rest away behind the hut. His wife found this too much to bear, and went inside the hut sobbing. She sat upright still, holding a tiny oil lamp in her hand. Mbaaka went in after her and knocked the oil lamp out of her grasp. She promptly picked it up, and this was repeated several times. Eventually she gave up and, still not saying a word, lay down. Mbaaka, trying hard to make peace, lay down beside her, but no sooner was he down than his wife sat up again, and remained bolt upright for the next two hours.

25. Meanwhile there was a diversion. Kengé and his wife were also 593
having a squabble. Kengé, only indirectly connected with Njobo's [554]
family as an affine, was a person of some consequence because, although boastful, it was said he knew the forest better than any other Mbuti, and although he liked village life as well as any, he was not one for any display of individual authority. Roused by Mbaaka's having to go all the way to Cephu's camp to fetch back his wife, Kengé said that all wives were a lot of trouble, his own included. She was empty. "She cannot even speak; when she opens her mouth she just makes noises. She is an animal."

593 Everyone was tired of disputes in the camp, and they turned on
• 578 Kengé and told him it was he who was a bad husband. He promptly said, "I shall tell my mother; I shall tell her everything, and she will come here." His mother was notoriously argumentative, and the thought of having another disputant on their hands was too much. There were unanimous shouts of disapproval, whereupon Kengé said, "So you let the Lesé Mbuti join empty Cephu in our territory, Cephu who always hunts against us and should be turned out completely and forever, yet you do not want your own mother-in-law to come and live with you. What kind of Mbuti are you?" He went inside his hut and after a few muffled cries and sounds of blows, there were other sounds, less offensive, and in a half hour or so Kengé and his wife came out together, making a great show of friendliness, peering into Mbaaka's hut and laughing loudly at them for fighting so much.

578
DISPUTES CONCERNING TRIVIA

152 A headache, a hungry stomach, a painful leg, a leaking hut or a damp forest—almost any kind of discomfort is likely to make an Mbuti irritable, and he will pick a quarrel with ease and readiness so that he can make his heart feel better, as they say. It is known to be bad to keep things concealed, so there is no particular disgrace in voicing suspicions and revealing antagonisms, particularly if it is done quietly. Few, however, managed to make their heart feel better without creating a great deal of noise and making everyone else feel considerably worse.

578 Most such disputes, and there were likely to be several every day, died as they began, in complete indecision. The following are typical instances:

[524] 26. A small girl, playing in imitation of the boy's *nkumbi*, play-
fully whipped some of the men, including her uncle, Masalito. Masa-
[881] lito was enraged and hit her, which started a fight between his age mates—that is, the young hunters.

27. Pepei fought another youth with sticks because the other told
[534] him to beat the *banja* sticks, and Pepei said he was not a woman to
[562] be ordered around. Tungana's wife then beat Pepei, saying that women do not get ordered around, only children, and that is why nobody will marry him.

[593] 28. Kengé beat his sister because she caught cold.

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an
administrator there who took her photograph. Masisi demanded the 578
money, and the girl said she did not ask for any. Masisi's wife said the 648
girl was a fool, that she could have got fifty francs. In fact, she was a
thief because she deprived everyone of cigarettes. The girl was still 578
standing up where she arrived in camp, and Masisi's wife went up 152
and forced her to sit down, and thrust her private parts into the girl's
face as a gesture of contempt. The girl's parents said nothing.

30. A man burped loudly during the evening meal, and brought [264]
forth insults from all sides that would have developed into a fight had [531]
Moké not taken the *banja* sticks and started beating them, a sign [765]
for the *molimo* singing to begin. [533]

31. A girl, decorated with leaves stuck in her bark cloth, was danc- [301]
ing vigorously and some of the leaves kept falling out. She blamed
the younger children and started beating them until they fled, crying.
Nobody interfered.

32. Amabosu, for no known reason, refused to allow his wife to [593]
move the fire from their hearth when changing camp. She went to [372]
her brother's hut and sat there sulking for nearly a whole day. Ama-
bosu, fed by his mother, paid no attention.

33. Occasionally, however, even the most trivial origins can lead 578
to a serious and lasting rift. Such a dispute, described more fully in 152
The Forest People (Chapter 6), involved two brothers, Aberi and 593
Masalito. It started when Masalito went to visit his brother on a rainy
day. Masalito was in the main camp, Aberi in Cephu's camp. Aberi
was asleep, and his wife insulted Masalito twice, first by refusing to
smoke the same pipe, second by offering him an old and dirty pipe-
stem to take back to the main camp with him. This led to a fight be- [626]
tween the two brothers which was temporarily healed by the force of
ridicule levelled against Aberi, and further subdued by the action
of the *molimo* in beating Masalito's hut as a sign of the displeasure
of the forest.

However, the bad feeling remained, if hidden, until Aberi's death.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THEFT 685

Theft, apart from the kind practiced by Pepei, was unknown except [177]*
in the village context. Sometimes when Pepei was caught he was [183]
thrashed; on the other hand, sometimes he was tolerantly laughed
at and allowed to go his way. There was once, however, a curious
case that was never settled.

685 [224] [462] 34. During a hunt Ekianga's unmarried niece, Ekimanji, had charge of his two spears and lost these together with her own basket, full of meat. Her story was that she was standing about, waiting for the rest to join up after a beat, when she had to answer a call of nature. She went a few yards away, and on return found the two spears and the basket gone. She called out, and Masalito, who was nearby, came running over. She asked him to stand there while she went and searched, which she did. She could find no traces. He also searched, and neither could he. It then began to rain and they returned to camp.

The next day the hunt went back to the spot and searched all over but found nothing. They even repeated the hunt in the same spot, casting the nets and beating toward them. Nobody offered any suggestions as to what could have happened, other than that they must have been taken. Not a single individual was hinted at directly or [186] [183] indirectly. One of the hunters suggested it was a villager, for Mbuti don't steal, but everyone knew that no villager was anywhere about in the forest during the hunt. However, the explanation, weak as it was, was better than none and, if not accepted, it was certainly not denied. The matter was not mentioned again.

• 578 DISPUTES CONCERNING THE VILLAGE

*177 186 436 [621] 35. It might be thought that the village would be a common source of dispute. Far from being so, the village most frequently occurs in disputes as above, as a means of ending a dispute without settling the blame on any Mbuti and thus hastening the process of fission. Even money is assimilated into the forest pattern of distribution of food, insofar as it is ever brought into the forest (see 29, above). The only real dispute over money in my records was because the money was received for a spear which had been stolen from one villager and sold back to another, and it was difficult to assess the correct apportionment of the "game" (a hundred francs) between the "hunters."

*177 186 [758] [514] [224] The village, however, was often being blamed for ill health, and with frequent justification, for sanitation, which was no problem for the Mbuti in the forest, was a major one in the village. The village also frequently took the blame for poor hunting, particularly if some individual or some group in the band (e.g., the women who did not beat) seemed to be genuinely to blame.

*177 439 One dispute of major proportions, and one of the few which occasioned direct action, did, however, have its cause in the village. The

627 [126] attempt is made to settle the issue in question one way or the other, even verbally, and the equally small number in which direct action is taken. The percentages are given as follows:

627 578

DISPUTE	Number Recorded	Number of Decisions or Judgments made	Instances of Positive Action
Food	67	5 (7.5%)	4 (5.9%)
Sex	37	4 (10.8%)	5 (13.5%)
Village	11	1 (9.1%)	1 (9.1%)
Theft	5	3 (60%)	
Territory	4		3 (75%)

These figures indicate the greatest degree of decision, either by the passing of opinions (judgments) or by the taking of action, in the least frequent types of dispute.

In the most common disputes of all, those arising out of trivia and having no particular direction and no specific purpose, it is only about one in a hundred that comes to a head in a way that calls for action or decision, such as the case of the two brothers (34). Such [626 182] disputes gave frequent opportunity for the voicing of opinions on almost any matter, and acted as a mechanism by which most incipient disputes of a more serious nature were detected and aired before they grew to major proportions.

627 626 578 121 182 An examination of all the recorded disputes shows that without a doubt there are forces working toward order in Mbuti society, despite its unformalized nature and the absence of political or legal "systems." Such forces include the compelling demands of the stomach, which suffers directly from any dispute that interrupts the hunting and gathering economy, as any major dispute will; the weight of public opinion, expressed verbally, or through ridicule or mime, or in action such as thrashing (rare, and only for youths) or ostracism and exile. These are the negative forces against antisocial behavior. 626 121 182 778 There are equally positive forces toward social behavior, including the esteem of one's age mates and elders, the affection of children, the contentment of a full stomach and, perhaps above all, the belief in the personal benevolence of the forest.[10] The positive aspect of the

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[171] [10] Fortune (1935) describes a parallel situation among the Manus, who, like the Mbuti, respect morality beyond the pressures of social sanctions. Fortune claims that the religious sanctions provide a socially established way of keeping the social sentiment "quick," and of bringing offenders to book without seeming to be personal. The latter aspect of religious sanctions is probably more vital for the Mbuti, where any dispute is

P
ment of a dispute is to avoid attaching blame to one individual or 177*
another, for this would result in a rift in the band. The blame has to 754
be either deflected or dissipated, and the village notion of witchcraft 626
is sometimes used to this end.

P
In the prolonged dispute over Ekianga and his three wives, the 177*
situation was aggravated by having, in the same band, Ekianga's 754
brother-in-law, Amabosu, with whom he had exchanged sisters, and 578 •
Amabosu's mother, old Sau. Sau made an ideal scapegoat, conform- 554
ing to the village notions of what a witch should look like, and her 595
role at times became rather like that of the camp clown. She would be accused of dancing outside people's huts in the middle of the night, and on one occasion she was distinctly heard to mutter in an exasperated voice, "Do they expect me to urinate inside my hut?"—for she had indeed emerged in the middle of the night to answer a call of nature. Nonetheless, on that occasion she rose to the needs of the moment and agreed that she had been dancing because she had been made to dance, and she was not responsible, and she was sorry for any harm she had done.

However, she was a major and active peacemaker in the family squabble, actively intervening to prevent Ekianga and Amabosu from fighting, and equally actively looking after the children of all the wives involved, passing them from one to the other and in this way helping to preserve reasonable relationships at least between her daughter and her son's wife.

P
All the more in the village was Sau used as a scapegoat. But whereas 177*
in the forest the scapegoat, even if the clown, feels the full weight of 534
the blame he takes upon himself and may suffer some unpopularity, 754
though temporary, in the village there is no such disadvantage, and 761
old Sau played her role with zest. At a time when there were an un- (647)
usual number of deaths through stomach disorders contracted in the C
village, the Mbuti were sharply criticized by the villagers for allowing 754
this to happen and not taking the proper protective measures. It was 563
plainly witchcraft, if not sorcery, and it was their duty to find the witch and have the necessary purification. An elaborate witch-hunt was held in the village, and of course Sau was finally "divined" and dragged out of her hut—where, at the time, she was dozing—complaining about all the noise.

P
Emerging into the center of the village she made all the usual pro- 754
tests, and performed the usual trick of stabbing herself with a knife, 177*
but holding it carefully so that it just nicked the skin sufficiently to 554

P

754 were, harm upon another. Masisi put it as well as it could be put when
*177 discussing Aberi's death (pp. 61–62), allegedly due to an Ngwana's
[829] use of sorcery. The circumstances were such—the three healthy "accused"
all dying within such a short space of time following the curse
—that there was a general discussion of village sorcery. There was disagreement
of opinion as to whether or not it involved supernatural
power, as claimed by the villagers. Most Mbuti stated bluntly that
P this was impossible, for such power was necessarily good. They held
[761] that the deaths had all been caused by poison. Others were not so
[278] sure. But the crux of the discussion was that whether caused by supernatural
power or by poison, the action was not that of a man. Masisi
P said, "If you have a quarrel with a man you hit him with a wooden
[578] club, and he sees who hit him. You do not go and hide yourself and
kill him with your thoughts."

P While the Mbuti seek to remove themselves as far as possible from
*177 sorcery, feeling as though they were contaminated by it, their atti-
754 tude to other associated supernatural beliefs of the villagers is quite
771 different, being determined by different experience. A villager who
C has cursed one man may claim that the sickness of that man's distant
754 cousin is a result of his curse, or that the falling of a tree that nearly
killed the man's child was equally a result of the curse. These are not
allegations that can be proved or disproved, and the Mbuti consequently
have a somewhat ambivalent attitude toward sorcery; their
disbelief is tinged, at least, by a reluctant suspicion.

C However, the villagers also believe that there exist various malevo-
776 lent spirits, sometimes spirits of sorcerers, and that these spirits have
C to be avoided, for there is no sure way of placating or propitiating
[782] them. Their abode is the forest, which to the villagers is the abode of
[784] all evil. Their powers are phenomenal and almost insuperable, avoidance
being the only sure safeguard, ritual propitiation being enough
to prevent the spirits from entering the village. Thus the forest is a
place to be avoided on account of the spirits.

P The Mbuti see two things very clearly. One is that such spirits sim-
776 ply do not exist in their forest, and the other is that this particular
*177 village belief deserves to be maintained for as long as it is effective
538 in keeping villagers out of the forest. Consequently the Mbuti, who
are great storytellers at all times, delight in stories—among themselves
and in front of villagers—that enumerate the powers and horrors
of such evil forest spirits. Sometimes the stories are of village
origin, embellished by Mbuti imagination; sometimes they are pure

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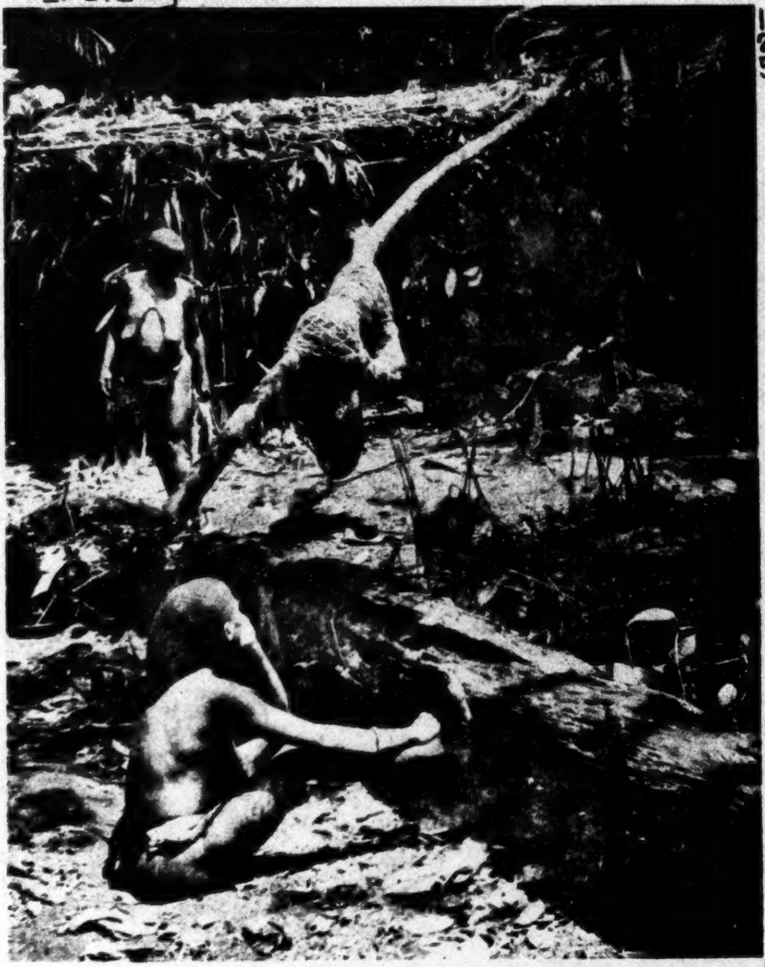

[578]
[593]
[152]

27. A common way of showing displeasure is to sulk, talking to no one. A young girl here keeps her back to her husband, wherever he might be, and refuses to cook his food.

822
the camp or on the hunt, and they also sometimes shout at a storm
or at rain to drive away bad weather.

But more important than Mbuti recognition of the practical power 822
of noise is their recognition of its social value. When they say it is 577
the duty of the hunter age level to make noise, they mean just that, even though it is precisely noise that will negate the hunter's other duty, to hunt. The Mbuti do not connect the two duties—the one refers to the hunt, the other to camp life. It is in the camp that the hunter is expected to make noise; that is, to be disputatious. For the countervalue, *ekimi*, is only "quiet" and does not refer to silence (*kobinengo*), which is considered as an indication of great and imminent danger. A silent camp is considered a bad camp and the badness is destroyed by destroying the silence, which can be done in two
ways. One is by singing, which is recognized as sound but only described as noise when it takes place in the village. Singing, as we have [533]
seen, is essentially a form of communication, even of communion, [778]
with the benevolent forest divinity. It destroys silence and "rejoices [182]
the forest" at the same time. But this is recognized as having only temporary efficacy. To strike at the roots of silence, one employs "noise" in the sense of argument, which is certainly its most common connotation.

Silence in a camp betokens unusual ill humor, which is common 822
among the Mbuti when in their village camp, but not in the forest 577
(except when the hunt is spoiled by rain). Disputes seldom remain 578 •
hidden for long because of the intimate nature of camp life, but any 152
length of time is too long, and when a camp is silent it is invariably 626
the hunters who find some cause for "making noise." It matters little what they pick on, but it is preferably not the underlying dispute causing the silence. It may be directed at the cause if personal feelings run high, but then the hunters are criticized for making too much noise, *akami ndasi*. Youths and elders will alike shout at the hunters and tell them this, but the noise will not die down until the disputants have either come into the open with their dispute, putting it before the band, or have been forced to join together in some common but unrelated cause.

Thus there was an occasion on which Amabosu, for no evident 593
reason, took to beating his wife, Amaloku, with unwonted vigor and 578
regularity. A certain amount of wife-beating is considered good, and the wife is expected to fight back. But Amaloku was aware of the real reason for her husband's behavior, which was her own brother's

593 persistence in sleeping with Amabosu's sister despite her having just
578 given birth to a child. She evidently felt shame for her brother, but
whatever the reason she did not fight back. This only enraged Amabosu
further so that his beatings grew to the point where Amaloku
was bruised and lame and perpetually in tears. After a week of this
593 the band was well aware of the underlying cause, but it was nonetheless
578 concerned for the restoration of good relations between Amabosu
622 and his wife. Being outwardly a domestic squabble, nobody interfered,
and the camp was silent. The silence was very real, as it can
be when the Mbuti get moody, and it settled on the whole camp the
moment each beating began. Masisi tried to create minor disputes
about hunting, in the hope that Amabosu and his wife would join in,
but they were not to be drawn so easily. Even when one very real
[685] dispute raged beside them (Pepei having stolen some meat from Sau,
Amabosu's mother) they maintained a sullen silence that overcame
the band as soon as Pepei had been dealt with by a sound beating.

It was not until Amaloku, in an effort to run away from Amabosu,
tripped and fell by Tungana's hearth that the camp had its chance.
[252] As she tripped, Amaloku scattered several logs from the fire, upsetting
a piece of meat that had been roasting over the coals, casting it into
the ashes. Old Tungana let out a yell and his wife slapped Amaloku
hard. Amaloku wailed as she had never wailed before, whereupon
Masisi and Manyalibo, both great hunters, went to the middle of the
camp and jointly denounced Amaloku as a troublesome girl who
should be sent back to her people. She had been badly taught, because
[372] no Mbuti ever treats fire like that, or throws food into fire. She
was no good as a daughter, no good in camp, and evidently no good
in bed because she was still without child.

This utterly unjustified and personal attack brought out not only
Amabosu but also Ekianga (Amaloku's brother, the basic cause of
all the trouble) in common defense of the weeping girl. Masisi and
[372] Manyalibo put up a good argument, for it was indeed considered bad
to accidentally step into a fire, and the camp was soon in an uproar
with the sister-exchange section uniting in defense, supported largely
by the youths. The hunters, with the exception of Ekianga and Amabosu
themselves, allied with Masisi and Manyalibo. Finally old
[198] Tungana stopped everything by whistling and then making one of his
rare speeches. It was to the effect that everyone was behaving like
[186] villagers, so he might as well go to the village and stay there. He called
to his wife to pack her things, and grumbling loudly he grabbed his

bow and arrows and started to walk out of the camp. His son Makubasi, 593
one of the hunters, called after him that he was going "emptily" 578 •
(*ue ke bulé*)—using the KiNgwana word for "emptily," with its connotations 626
of war—(See footnote to p. 295) and without reason. Makubasi pointed out that all the noise had ceased and that now there was *ekimi*, or quiet. Tungana stopped, listened, said that he did not want to kill the camp so he would come back, but from now on there must be nothing but *ekimi* and no more jumping in and out of his hearth, spoiling his food, destroying his fire.

Ekianga continued to sleep with Amabosu's sister, but Amabosu 593
no longer beat Ekianga's sister in retaliation. On the contrary, even 626
before Tungana's grumbling protests had died down, he was off getting 822
some herbs to soothe his wife's wounds. And if the camp had been upset by noise rather than silence, the hunters would have killed it with more noise. The ultimate solution generally lies in the hands of the elders, but the process of restoring equilibrium is initiated by the hunters' fulfilling their duty of making noise. Thus though noise cannot be said to be good, its use (properly controlled) is recognized as having beneficial potentialities.

5. QUIET (*ekimi*) is not merely the opposite of noise; it is something 577
else and it is the ultimate goal toward which life is directed. 183
As with noise, its practical advantages are plain, particularly on the 822
hunt. It is also recognized as an indication that all is well; a quiet camp is a camp untroubled by dissension, a quiet child is a well-fed child, and so forth. In the same way that noise is associated with heat, so is quiet associated with coolness, and this is generally a desirable quality, whereas heat is undesirable.[8] The plaintive cry of the elders when trying to stop an argument or settle a dispute is often "*Me oki akami, me toni akami; me kondi ekimi, ndura ekondi ekimi*" —"I hear noise, I refuse noise; I love quiet, the forest loves quiet."

The ideal is quiet, and quietness is associated with the forest. The 577
concept is inseparable from the concept of joy, which is *ekimi mota*, 183
or "powerful quietness." Joy is an intensification of quietness and is 828
brought about by the occurrence of the norm: good hunting, good [822]
weather, good health, harmonious relations, plenty of children. These conditions do not always prevail, in which case active steps have to be taken to improve the hunt, to be less disputatious, to keep better health, to have more children, and to drive bad weather away. En-

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[8] The village is in fact, as in thought, hot and noisy, whereas the forest is cool and quiet.

(empty), *mbafu* (stupid) and *mota* (in the sense of dangerous) as 186
assessments of all village institutions and beliefs. A certain amount 577
of this ridicule is again a part of the joking relationship, but it is sig-
nificant that the Mbuti do not frequently accuse the villagers of being
sinana, "bad," however much they might refer to the village itself as
a "bad place." From the forest standpoint, however, there is no ques- 177 *
tion but that the village system is singularly inapplicable, and there- 186
fore at least *bulé* (empty) and possibly *mbafu* (stupid), if not 577
actually *mota*, or dangerous. The village does become *mota*, and very 626
much so, the moment it impinges upon the forest, and any villager in this situation becomes truly *sinana*, or bad. But as seen, in forest life even *akami* can be turned to good use, and the noise of village life, while in itself definitely not good, can be turned to advantage. In the same way that *akami* is the duty of hunters in the forest, as a means of resolving disputes, or at least bringing them into the open, so may *akami* in the village be used as an institutionalized means of resolving a dispute without settling the blame on any single Mbuti. Thus individual villagers, village demands, or village allegations of witchcraft or sorcery can all be invoked to explain what could otherwise only be explained by Mbuti delinquency. Individuals or families who are under criticism, openly or covertly, may decide to go to the village to fulfill some obligations to village *karé* or *kpara*. The village generally is a place for relief from the tensions of forest life, and by bringing their *akami* to this center of *akami* the Mbuti often hope to shed their own internal dissensions. The village is associated with "war" (*vita*).[8]

In the sense of constant interpersonal conflicts, there is no doubt 177 *
that for whatever reason an Mbuti band reassembles after a stay in a 578 •
village, it is likely to reunite in the forest with considerably more 626
ekimi than it possessed on leaving. In the same way that individuals leave a forest camp for a visit to the village because of *akami* (probably of their own making), so whole bands move to the village when

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[8] *Vita* is, strictly speaking, a KiNgwana word, but is invariably used by these Mbuti, as are some other words of the same language, even when speaking in KiBira. A future study of such usages might reveal significant connotations in Mbuti thought. Certainly the wars still uppermost in the minds of the Mbuti, as of others in this region, are those of the Arab slavers, whose pawns the Ngwana were. Similarly the KiNgwana word *bulé* (empty) is used far more than its KiBira counterpart (*bobo*) when the implication is particularly derogatory. Thus *kelele bulé*, which is all KiNgwana, means empty noise, a phrase that might be used to describe a dispute that has no just cause. If an Mbuti were to refer to a dispute as being *akami bobo*, it would have a similar connotation. However, if he said *akami bulé*, it would no longer describe a merely pointless dispute, but one that is both without just cause and with deliberate hostile intent. In fact the odium of *vita* clings to almost every KiNgwana word, as does that of *mayelé*, or trickery. [192]

*177 the camp is filled with *akami*—not in search of *ekimi*, but in the hopes
578 of doing as the hunters do, killing noise with more noise.
626

*177 5. SONG brings us to the crux of the opposition between Mbuti and
583 villagers, for all song in villages is by definition "empty," even if sung
181 by Mbuti, and even if, as is rarely the case, the song is strictly Mbuti §
in origin. That is, while in the village the Mbuti no longer have the
ultimate safeguard of being able to "rejoice the forest" through song.
Even if they tried, it would be *bulé*. Song being directly associated
with *ekimi*, it follows, and the Mbuti affirm, that there can be no
ekimi, or "quiet," in the village. *Ekimi*, as stated, is the ultimate goal
*177 of the Mbuti, and it is only *ekimi* that can please the forest. Visiting
181 the village, then, would be a treacherous act beyond reconciliation
[224] under Mbuti values if it were not for the Mbuti attitude to such
[778] visits as being a form of hunt, for hunting is pleasing to the forest,
and hunting is also associated with noise and danger, *akami* and
mota. The rationalization may seem a feeble one, but to the Mbuti
it is adequate and convenient.

*177 Thus while the more formal institutions of the band, age levels and
181 territorial affiliation, work internally to achieve stability and externally
182 to directly counteract village attempts to subordinate the Mbuti, so
439 do forest values directly counter village values, maintaining the complete separation of the two peoples. The economic exchange that takes place, while undeniably mutually convenient, may also be in part a mere recognition of territorial propinquity and of mutual opposition, a mechanism for avoiding open hostility, which would otherwise be the only possible relationship.

*177 The strongly forest-oriented value system of the Mbuti, while oper-
181 ating toward the maintenance of internal order, completely counters
186 the attempts of the villagers to assert their dominance by supernatural sanctions based on village values. But the answer to the question
[224] as to why the Mbuti go to the extreme of allowing themselves to be
[881] circumcised and initiated by the villagers may be more than that offered by the Mbuti hunting metaphor.

*177 The metaphor recalls the technique of a hunter in taking on the
181 appearance (and smell) of his quarry, of rubbing himself with a paste
186 made of the heart and brains and eyes of the animal so that he can
224 feel and think and see like his quarry. It is not a technique widely practiced, though it is practiced by elephant hunters, and by some archers, and by elders who are out hunting on their own. It is more

widely practiced in the mimetic hunting dances, by which it may be 177*
supposed that the dancer is trying, magically, to influence the action 18
and movement of the game. In this light the Mbuti acceptance of the 186
nkumbi seems more plausible, as a "magical" means of gaining power 224
over the villagers. It is not entirely unlike the situation described by [188]
Beattie (1960, p. 78) for Nyoro reactions to foreign powers such as [789]
Europeans, Polish expatriates, and airplanes. The Nyoro attempt
was to gain some control over the situation by becoming possessed by
the spirits of these foreign powers.

There may also be a certain amount of seepage of village beliefs 177*
into the Mbuti subconscious, despite the formidable structural oppo- 754
sition they have raised to all such influences. There is certainly cause
to think that the village beliefs of witchcraft and sorcery, confused as
they are by the Mbuti, nonetheless have for them a certain sinister
ring of conviction.[9]

It is perhaps for that reason that the only plainly discernible sym- 177*
bolism evident in Mbuti ritual is concerned with life. Of all the oppo- 761
sitions between the forest and the village, such as abundance/hunger, 182
unity/disunity, moral/immoral, equal/unequal, cool/hot, song/
silence, quiet/noise, the most significant are undoubtedly the last
two, for silence and noise are associated ultimately with death. If the [776]
Mbuti suspect there are, in the village, supernatural powers with
which they should come to terms, it is for purposes of defense. And [778]
they see their major defense in the power of their own supernatural,
the forest.

Their desire is to counteract the forces of hunger, disunity, immoral- 182
ity, inequality, heat, silence and noise, forces that amount to death 761
for the Mbuti. Their focus of attention is on the preservation and con- 765
tinuation of life. The relatively simple ritual, if it can truly be called 561
that, of the *molimo* festival is supercharged with an emotional con-
cern, a burning desire, for life. As might be expected, it reinforces [578] •
those aspects of Mbuti society that require constant attention: age
divisions are clearly symbolized in the three fires for the three upper
age groups; the value of sharing (on nonlineal grounds!) is emphasized in the technical division of the songs, again bringing in division along age lines and demanding close cooperation; the reluctance to share is symbolized at the same time as the friction between youths

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[9] Again, a linguistic study might help greatly, not only through separating institutions and concepts that derive from different tribes, but in revealing the location of hidden areas of forest/village opposition. Unfortunately we still lack any published studies of KiNgwana, KiBira and KiLesé, let alone of the divers Mbuti groups.

182 and fathers when youths go around trying to snare food from each
761 hut (the women ultimately letting them have it, often ostenta-
765 tiously). The opposition of adjacent age levels, and particularly the
561 hostility between sons and fathers, is plainly manifest in the morning
• 978 rampages of the *molimo* trumpet. The forest itself is symbolized by
[873] the leaves that conceal the trumpet (itself the symbol of the life-giving organ), and *ekimi* is the avowed objective sought through song. *Akami*, its antithesis, is symbolized again in the morning rampage, frequently a physical battle between older and younger youths (dividing brothers) and between youths and hunters, and always a wordy battle, with the hunters winning if for no other reason than that there is a limit to the energy even of Mbuti youths.

182 Thus the *molimo* admirably reinforces social values and allows for
761 the harmless expression of hostility in areas of conflict. The only sym-
765 bolic representation of sexual conflict is *ekokomea*, and of course the
831 fire dance. But here the symbolism runs deeper, and concerns the
392 ultimate end, for just as *akami* is associated with death, so is *ekimi* associated with life. The fire is not as realistically symbolic as the trumpet, though it is undoubtedly as feminine as the trumpet is masculine. But it is impossible not to be reminded of other instances of the use of fire and sex symbolism.[10]

761 And perhaps we should see this concern with life not only in terms
181 of the threat of death from the village. Death is a threat to all societies, and for the Mbuti it is probably the one imperfection in an otherwise perfect life; that is to say, it is the one thing for which they have no certain answer, and to a practical people such as the Mbuti uncertainty is imperfection.

*177 Ultimately the efforts of the Mbuti, if not of their system, are directed to keeping the villagers physically out of the forest, an effort that is successful largely because the villagers are only too thankful
*177 not to have to go into the forest. But just the fact that one villager
754 can set up a fishing camp in mid-forest and be visited by other villagers, or that a chief can send his representative to a hunting camp to demand (but not necessarily obtain) meat, means that even the forest

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[771] [10] For instance, Audrey Richards (1956) writes of the Bemba that access to the ancestral spirits is to be had through the correct handling of fire and sex, and stresses (*ibid.*, p. 30, *seq.*) the ritual association of sex, blood and fire as the *idée maîtresse* behind most of the ritual behavior of the Bemba. Hocart would certainly have seen the *molimo*, and the "baptism of fire" (when Moké passes his hands through the flames and rubs them over his face, then gently touches the hands of all those around), as a request "for the gift of undying life" (Hocart, 1952, p. 47).

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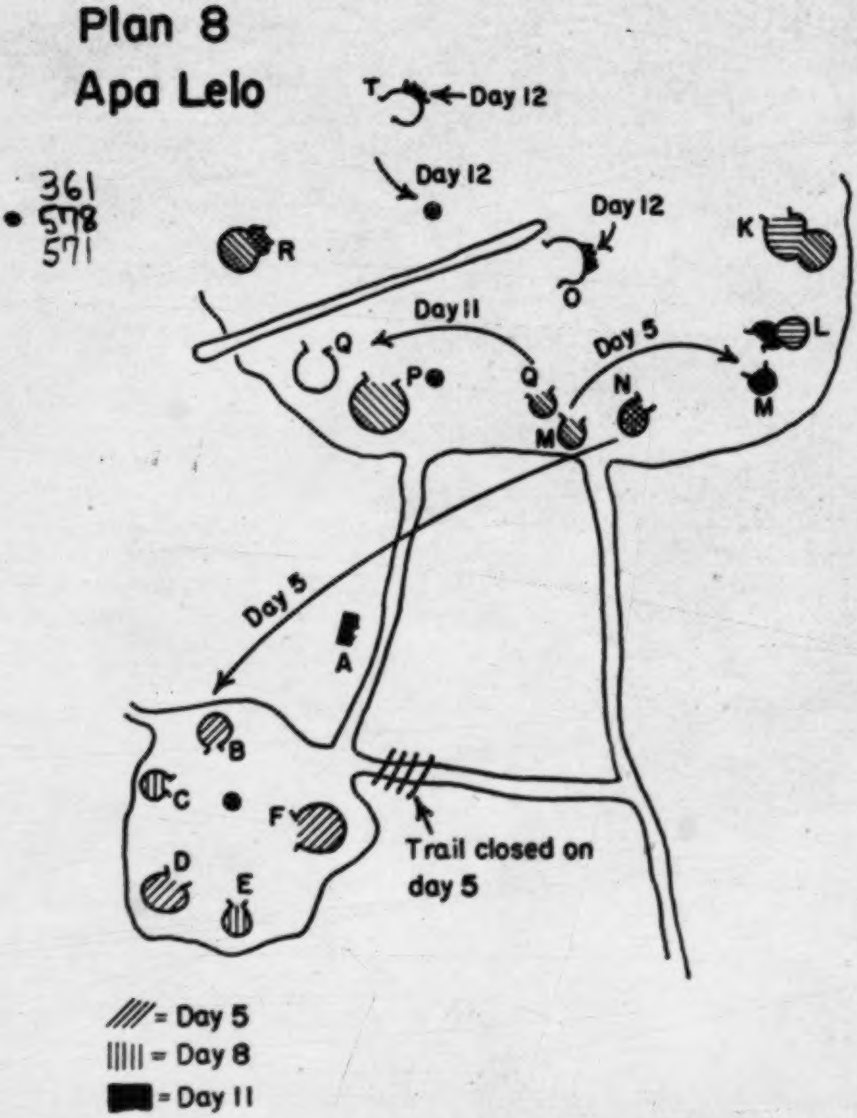
Plan 8
Apa Lelo
T
Day 12
Day 12
Day 12
R
K
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Day 11
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Day 5
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Day 5
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Trail closed on day 5
= Day 5
= Day 8
= Day 11

Apa Lelo: *changes at southern end of camp due to Cephu's arrival.*

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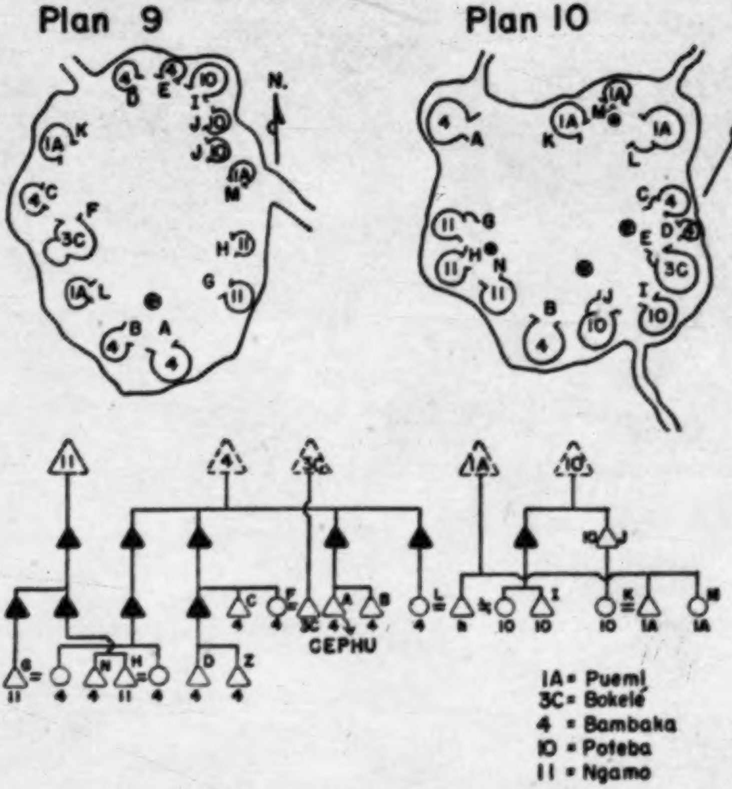
Plan 9
Plan 10
N.
N
CEPHU
1A = Puemi
3C = Bokelé
4 = Bambaka
10 = Poteba
11 = Ngamo

[601]

Cephu's camp before (Plan 9) and after (Plan 10) his hunting offense.

[*Plan 11 is located inside back cover.*]

[P.360 is blank]

P 156
hunter he was blessed with a large family. He had a powerful and
penetrating voice, took an active part in any dispute, and usually P [152]
managed to shout his opponents down, which is one of the chief [578]
ways the Pygmies have of settling a dispute. His family were all P [142]
strikingly fine-looking, with almost Greek-like appearance although
of normal Pygmy stature—under four and a half feet.

Most Pygmies have unmistakable features, other than height, P 142
that set them apart from the Negroes. Their legs are short in proportion
to their bodies; they are powerful, muscular, and usually splay-backed;
their heads are round and the eyes are set wide apart; they
have flat noses almost as broad as their mouths are long. The head hair
grows in peppercorn tufts, and the body hair varies from one extreme
to the other—some Pygmies are covered thickly from head to foot.
Another characteristic is the alert expression of the face, direct and P 157
unafraid, as keen as the body, which is always ready to move with
speed and agility at a moment's notice. All these traits are uncharacteristic C
of the Negro tribes that live in the forest around the Pygmies. [157]
These tribes are a rather shifty, lazy lot who survived the
ravages of Tippu Tip's slave-traders by treachery and deceit. In the
villages you will sometimes find Pygmies who are like this too, but
they are scorned by the BaMbuti who have remained in the forest
and have refused to be settled.

P 156
Masisi's children had finer features, with longer faces and straight
noses, and they were slimmer and less stocky. His eldest son, Ageronga, P [142]
was a fine hunter and often used to take his father's place.

Another member of the same clan, a cousin of Masisi's, was Manyalibo. P [551]
A traditionalist, he was older than Masisi, and the son of an
elder brother of Masisi's father, yet he had less say in everyday
matters because he was not such an active hunter. Nor did he have
such a fine family. He had two daughters of his own, but no sons,
and although he had adopted a distant nephew, Madyadya, the boy
was proving a great trial, having been spoiled by everyone, as orphans

THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

156

About a year after I had left the last time, Kolongo had been killed by a crocodile, and his mother had been so upset she had left the group and her entire family, and gone back to her old village. Her other son, Ekianga, remained as head of the family. It was a different clan but related by marriage to Njobo and Masisi and Manyalibo.

Ekianga was anything but a traditionalist in some ways, though in others he was as conservative as the rest of his relatives. His most [595] untraditional act was to have three wives. He was a very great hunter, and as vain as could be, and he liked imitating the ways of the outside world, where it is a sign of wealth to have many wives. The Pygmies say that one is enough to manage, and judging by Ekianga's constant domestic difficulties they are right. He was hairy, broad-chested, and powerful almost to the point of ugliness, and from somewhere he had learned how to put on a perfect toothpaste smile. He always built his huts a different shape from everyone else's, [342] and in the Pygmy camp near the village his house was the biggest and the smartest of them all, sheltering his entire ménage.

His youngest wife was a beautiful girl called Kamaikan. She was [142] even lighter than most Pygmies, yellowish-brown, instead of the more usual coffee-brown. Her brother and mother also lived with the 156 same hunting group, and there was constant friction, for on marrying 596 her Ekianga had given a "sister"—actually a fairly distant relative— 583 to her brother, Amabosu, in exchange. This exchange is made with 578• the full consent of all parties, but none the less it leads to a division of loyalties, and Amabosu was a very temperamental Pygmy. He was 156 a fine hunter, but he was particularly renowned as the best singer and best drummer and best dancer in the area; for these qualities alone his prestige was enormous. His skinny old mother, Sau, was 156 not without fame of her own. Old and infirm people, amongst the 888 Pygmies, are regarded, not exactly with suspicion or mistrust, but with apprehension. In a vigorous community of this kind where mobility is essential, cripples and infirm people can be a great handi-

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888 cap and may even endanger the safety of the group. Hence there are numerous legends of old people's being left to die if they cannot keep up with the group as it moves from camp to camp. Like old Tungana, Sau knew this, and although she was still healthy she made sure everyone knew it by taking the most vigorous and unexpected part in any dispute, her sharp acid voice betraying a certain bitterness at the way she was treated. For not only was Sau old, she was also almost alone, with only her son and daughter near her, while everyone else had brothers, sisters, cousins, parents, children and grandchildren.

The Negroes said that Sau was a witch and should be killed or
[954] driven away. I used to look at her, squatting over the fire outside her hut, knees hunched up to her chin, staring silently into the middle of the camp. She certainly seemed sinister, as she gazed without blinking, taking in everything that was going on, not moving hour after hour. Her son Amabosu, the great singer, had those same staring eyes, and at times looked even more like a witch than his
[123] mother did. This family nearly always built their hut next to mine, and I came to be very fond of them.

621 If these names are confusing to the reader, they at least help to
578 give a picture of the apparent confusion created in any Pygmy camp
[583] by the complicated network of intermarriage and sister-exchange. Essentially a camp is a happy-go-lucky, friendly place, but it is also full of all sorts of little tensions that can suddenly become magnified out of all proportion and lead to full-scale disputes.

621 This particular group was a rather large one, consisting of the two main families—that of Njobo and Masisi, Tungana and Manyalibo; and that of Ekianga and his relatives, including Sau and Amabosu. But to add to the tensions there was a third group which was constantly trying to attach itself. It was intermarried heavily with the other two, as often happens in an attempt to strengthen bonds and establish an unbreakable relationship.

him awake with her wailing and would probably forget to cook for 763 761
him. He set off at once for the village, grumbling, and Moke went 152
with him. Masisi started one of his loud tirades, saying in his sharp [765]
voice that Cephu never looked after his children properly, so it was
no wonder they died. This must have reminded Kenge of his joke, [522]
because he started laughing again, or perhaps he was laughing at
Masisi, but Masisi got angrier than ever and said he was going
straight to the village to tell Cephu what he thought of him. He
stamped angrily after Njobo and Moke, still shouting deprecating
remarks about the bereaved father.

Kenge laughed happily and said that there was going to be a
dreadful noise when Masisi got back to the village, so we would
do better to stay where we were until it was all over. Manyalibo, who [222]
had not said a word, suggested looking for *itaba*, a sweet edible root,
and with food our foremost thought we set off.

When we got back to the village in the late afternoon we found
everyone sitting around outside their little houses, staring gloomily
at nothing in particular. Masisi was still talking loudly, pointing at
the sky and over in the direction of Cephu's camp, from which I
could hear women wailing, and saying that it was a shame that
Cephu should let his children die and cause everyone so much trouble.
Tungana mournfully said that he didn't like funerals; the [764]
Negroes made so much noise at them. Masisi's younger brother, [589]
Mambunia, still a bachelor because one of his legs was crippled with [732]
paralysis and he was not able to hunt well enough to support a
family, added in shrill falsetto that Cephu was so inconsiderate and
such a trouble-maker that he would probably let his daughter die
completely—completely and absolutely.

I did not understand what he meant at first, but it provoked an 763
immediate response from Asofalinda, Ekianga's widowed sister. She 761 152
strode across the camp, marching with long swinging strides to 578
where Mambunia was sitting, his paralyzed leg stuck out in front

763
761 of him. She pointed her skinny hand at him, flinging her arm back-
152 ward and forward with every step, rhythmically enumerating all the
578 reasons why he should keep his mouth shut. He was a great one at complaining about other people being trouble-makers, but he made more noise than anyone. Besides, one should never say that anyone had died completely unless they had died for ever.

Madyadya, Manyalibo's adopted son, lazily wandered in between them and spitting on the ground said that Asofalinda made a pretty good noise herself. Old Moke laughed noiselessly. Asofalinda strode back to her house and slammed the fine wooden door; Mambunia continued to grumble to himself for a few minutes, and Masisi asked who was going to give him some tobacco.

761 It seemed that the girl was very ill with dysentery but was not
763 yet dead. The Pygmies express various degrees of illness by saying
153 that someone is hot, with fever, ill, dead, completely or absolutely dead, and, finally, dead for ever.

763 Unhappily, early the next morning loud wailing from Cephu's
152 camp, a quarter of a mile away, told us that the little girl was now dead for ever. When someone is ill the women relatives will wail, but it is a formal act, perhaps copied from the Negroes for whom it is an obligation. But when someone really dies, for ever, there is among the Pygmies a burst of uncontrollable grief, not only from relatives, but from friends. Even men will weep if they have been close to the dead person. It is a very different sound, and a terrible one, and that is what we heard shortly after dawn.

764 The funeral took place the same day, directed by the Negroes.
[123] I helped with the digging of the grave, but Kenge, Kelemoke,
Amabosu, and Masisi's eldest son Ageronga were the chief diggers.
[177] The Negroes lent the tools and stood there, giving instructions, and they became impatient and angry when we stopped and climbed out of the grave for a smoke. The young Pygmies laughed and joked, and

122 and, not being married, had no huts of their own. We had brought
132 589 our fire into the hut when the rain started, and with the heat of that
132 and of about fifteen bodies I was nearly suffocated. Every now and
342 then the rain found its way through the leaves above and sent a tiny
waterfall cascading to the floor. Then someone would stand up and
inspect the roof carefully, decide which leaf should be moved, and
pushing his fingers through the lattice adjust it. If he moved the
wrong leaf it started a leak in another place, bringing howls of an-
noyance from whoever was beneath. Kenge said it was always like
[581] this with a new hut, that was why it was so bad not to be married.
[593] If you were married, naturally your wife would get up when it
rained at night and fix the roof. But once the leaves had settled down,
not even the hardest rain would come in until the leaves got old and
dried out and began to curl. Tomorrow, he said, he would cover the
roof with dead wood and branches to hold the leaves flat.

512 The rain lasted only for half an hour, and as soon as it was over
[132] everyone came out of the huts. The fires were built up outside
[372] again; the women made a few adjustments to the roofs where they
[462] had found bad leaks; the men wandered off idly with their bows and
[224] arrows to see if they could find a bird or monkey for the evening
meal before it was too dark. The huts steamed as they dried out, and
a blue haze of smoke hung above the camp and was colored suddenly
with orange and gold and red as the clouds parted and the sun on the
• [578] invisible horizon sent a last blaze of light across the sky. The birds
burst into a final chorus of song, and two women argued loudly with
each other as to which should have the rest of the leaves that Ma-
samba had cut to help them.

Everyone was tired from the long day's trek and from the flurry
of building camp so quickly, and as soon as it was dark and the eve-
ning meal had been eaten we all crept into our huts and went to
[122] sleep. Kenge, seeing that I was a little concerned, had turned some
of the bachelors out, so there were only nine of us. For an hour the

352 the same way, the frame resting on four forked sticks, but we were
the only household to bother with a table. The others would build
[251] them later, Kenge said, when the hunting brought in so much meat
that they could spare some to dry for the villagers. Then they would
build tables higher than ours, and light fires under them.

[284] Chairs were even simpler to make. Kenge cut four sticks, each
about three and a half feet long, and twisted a vine thong around
the middle of the bundle. He stood them on the ground, and with
a turn of his hand he splayed out the ends and had a comfortable
352 seat. When you get used to this kind of chair you can even go to
516 sleep, resting your back along one stick and hooking your feet over
515 the opposite one. Pygmies, in the forest, are clean people, and they
do not like sitting on the ground. Either they make these simple
chairs or they sit on logs, often on the end of a log that is sticking
out of a fire. If the worst comes to the worst they will pull a leaf
from the roof of the nearest hut and sit daintily on that.

361 During the day more families arrived, and while they were busy
578 building their huts, those who had arrived the day before put the
finishing touches to theirs. Sometimes someone would apparently
have a grudge against a neighbor, or a dislike for someone who had
built a hut opposite. I saw several women turning the entrances of
their huts to point in different directions, toward friends or relatives.
During the course of any one camp women are continually adding
[126] to their huts or changing the way they face. I found that a good
way of keeping track of the little jealousies that exist in any small
community was to make a daily plan of the camp, noting which
huts were being altered to face in which direction. I noticed that
Arobanai, Ekianga's senior wife, faced her hut very deliberately
away from old Sau, and that nobody was anxious to make use of the
space between Sau's hut and mine to build there.

361 On the third day Ekianga arrived with Kamaikan, and they in-

stalled themselves with the rest of the family at the north end of the 361
camp. Shortly afterward Cephu arrived. Ekianga had brought news [578] •
that he was on his way, and there had been a lot of argument. In [224]
spite of the auspicious killing of a sondu on the first day, the hunting
since had not been very good, and already the camp was large. There
were about twenty-five huts now, forming two circles, one on each
side of the central barrier of brush and trees.

In the early afternoon there was a silence in the camp and Kenge [151]
stood listening, looking across the camp to the south. He turned
and told me that Cephu was not far away and would be here in a
quarter of an hour. Almost to the minute Cephu arrived, leading a 361
band of another five families. Most of them stopped at the edge of 576
the camp at the south end; only Cephu and one other came over
to the main camp to greet us and announce his arrival. A new fire
had been built in the center of our clearing, opposite Manyalibo's
hut, and Cephu sat down there, one of the younger men getting up
to give him his chair. He asked about the hunting and gave us news
of the village. He said that his brother, who was a cripple, had not
wanted to come so far and had made a small camp half way, near
Apa Kadiketu. After a few minutes he left, not having been offered
anything to eat or any tobacco to smoke, and started building his
own camp about fifty yards to the south of the extreme edge of the
clearing. He built a tight little circle of huts, connected by a path 361
to the main trail on one side and to the camp on the other. He
chose that site because he had some relatives at that end of our camp.

The same day Manyalibo's daughter also arrived, with her hus- 156
band, Ausu. Ausu was a handsome Pygmy, strong, and clever at [551]
hunting both with spear and with net. He had caught many wild [224]
pig, although he was only in his early twenties, and once, when still
in his teens, he had nearly been killed by one. His wife, Kondabate, 156
was a Pygmy belle if there ever was one, and she knew it. The two 832
had been married for nearly three years but had no children. Kon- 826
[842]

765 baby was too young to know what was going on, and so could not
533 tell the others what he saw; possibly simply because it did not matter very much anyway, for the Song was not only Beautiful, it was Good and Powerful.

It took me some time to realize just how important song was. That first night I just thought of it as being a beautiful sound. After we had eaten the food that had been offered to the molimo we sang again, and at one point the younger men got up and danced around the fire, excitedly, but without any of the frivolity that would come later. This was the first night of the molimo and everyone was on his best behavior. Then when the dancing was over we heard the trumpet again, and as we sang it sang back to us, getting farther and farther away. As it went it carried our song with it, deeper and deeper into the forest. Finally we could hear it no more, and only the echoes of our own voices came back to us from the night.

765 Not long after that old Moke stretched and yawned and said
533 that he was tired and that everyone should go to sleep and let him
513 sleep. But the younger men paid no attention and went on singing, so Moke resignedly joined in. But after another half-hour, when it was not very long before dawn, even the younger men decided to
[372] quit. Moke picked up the log he had been sitting on, the end of
[373] which was glowing in the hot ashes, and shuffled back to his hut, swinging the log so that it glowed brightly and lit his way across the camp. Manyalibo simply stretched out where he was, right beside the molimo fire, and went to sleep there. A number of youths did likewise, their hunting nets making comfortable beds, but I went back to my hut. I found Kenge there, fast asleep. He was on my bed, wrapped in my blanket, snoring contentedly, and the hut was filled with smoke from the fire he had lit beside him.

765
533 In spite of the hunting that had to be done each day, the men
• 578 sang in this way every night. And every night we looked to see who
688

would come from Cephu's camp, for the amount of interest that 765
Cephu showed in the molimo was a topic for constant discussion 533
and criticism. Masimongo, who had relatives in Cephu's camp, always 578 •
upheld him when he did not appear himself or when his little 688
group made a poor showing. But Manyalibo allowed no such excuses, and his voice carried much more weight. He said, good conservative that he was, that all men should take part in the molimo regardless of what camp they belonged to, if they were anywhere near at all. Then he went through the mime showing what would have happened in the old days, to anyone who did not attend and was found sleeping. I thought momentarily of Kenge.

But the molimo was not only a matter of singing late into the 765
night. Each morning, too, there was activity, though of a different 533
nature. The evenings were serious, the older men taking the lead 535
in the singing and leaving the dancing largely to the younger men. 88
Sometimes there was a lot of horseplay, but the older men, like Moke, kept an eye on what was going on and held the youngsters in check. Often the molimo fire was made into two fires, the older men sitting at one and the youngsters at the other, and then all the dancing went on at the youths' fire while the elders sat at theirs and just sang, and watched their sons with dreamy eyes.

But in the mornings the youths came into their own completely. 765
Before the first glimmer of light filtered through into the camp, 882
those of us who had managed to get to sleep were waked by a violent 533
and raucous trumpeting from just outside the camp. This brought 534
cries of protest from the older men. Some of them appeared sleepily at the entrance to their huts and shouted, "Animal! Go away and keep quiet and let me sleep!" but to no avail. From the far end of the camp, near the path leading to Cephu's clearing, a wild cavalcade of youths swept into view, shouting and yelling, clustered so thickly that it was impossible to see the trumpet they were carrying. But it was there, with Amabosu blowing it. It blasted and shrilled and

765 growled and bellowed, and it rampaged around the camp, overturn-
882 ing any of the crude chairs that had been left outside, scattering the
534 remains of fires in all directions, and beating on the roofs of huts to
533 wake everyone up. Sometimes the youths seemed to divide at random into two sides and have a sort of tug of war with the trumpet, some trying to lead it in one direction, some in the other. It was not a real contest of strength, only acting. I wondered if perhaps this represented the original struggle for possession of the molimo, a struggle which some say was between Pygmies and animals, or others say was between men and women.

765 Ekianga took a prominent part in these morning affrays. He used
688 to lead the youths, always holding two spears, one under each arm,
536 pointing down at the ground as though he were looking for any sleeping person who should have been taking part in the activity. Sometimes he acted it out, stopping as though he saw an offender. Then he danced about and finally jabbed the spear blades at the earth.

765 I said to Kenge that this was what would happen to him if he
688 went off and took my bed and blanket again before the evening
183 singing had finished. Kenge laughed loudly and shouted across the
115
123 camp what I had said. But then he became serious and said that he had been singing all the time until Moke had first said he wanted to go to sleep. "When the old men want to sleep it is all right for us to sleep," he said. Then he added laconically, "And of course if we are tired it is all right for us to go to sleep, naturally." He thought the conversation not very interesting, so he gave an animal call and ran with great leaps and bounds, like the antelope he was named for, across the camp to join in the tug of war.

765 If anyone had given offense the previous day, usually by being
• 578 too argumentative, the youths in the morning rampage paid particular attention to the offender's hut. Cephu's camp of course came in for the most attention, and although Cephu complained loudly

each time, at the time, he never brought it up later as an issue for 765 578
discussion or dispute. One morning, after two brothers, Masalito 765
and Aberi, had been fighting, the "animal of the forest," making 578
more noise than ever, circled all around Masalito's hut and finally 825
pounced on it, beating on the roof and tearing off leaves and sticks. [593]
Some of the youths climbed up a tree that overhung the hut and broke off a heavy branch, which fell on the hut, blocking the entrance, but doing no real damage. The couple inside screamed their protests; then there was a sudden silence. Masalito had done the most dreadful thing of all. He had told the youths to take "that animal" away and throw it back in the water and stop all their noise. This spoiled the whole illusion, which is only a pretense in itself, that the women think that the molimo is an animal and do not know that it is a trumpet surrounded by a lot of noisy youths. The silence was followed by cries from all over the camp—cries of shame shouted by both men and women. The "animal" was galvanized into even greater action, and Masalito's hut was in danger of being completely destroyed. Then Njobo came sleepily out into the clearing and told the youths to go away. They had probably had their fill by then anyway, and they left, making a few last defiant noises, some in the direction of Njobo. As soon as they were gone the women came out of their huts, looked around to see how much damage had been done, then went to wash themselves and get breakfast. Children scampered around the irate Masalito as he cleared up the wreckage outside his hut, and as they danced up and down I heard one of them, bolder than the others, give a tiny hoot in imitation of the trumpet. Masalito tried to grab the child but they all ran away, laughing, to torment someone else.

For a month I sat every evening at the kumamolimo; listening, 123
watching, and feeling—above all, feeling. If I still had little idea 765
of what was going on, at least I [illegible] that air of importance and

selfish magic. Moke threw the horns in a fire and no more was said. 224 777
It so happened that the family in question continued to have good luck for some time.

Hunting, for a Pygmy group, is a co-operative affair—net-hunting 224
particularly. The use of private magic is frowned on, though there
is no law against it. The sacred hunting fire is all that they consider [372]
right and necessary, and this is found throughout the forest. It is thought to secure the blessing of the forest which provides the game, and to bring good luck to the entire group. Even those groups that hunt mainly with bow and arrow, hunt not as individuals, but for the group as a whole. For the net hunters it is impossible to hunt alone. Men, women and children all have to co-operate if the hunt is to be successful.

The "Fire of the Hunt" simply involves the lighting of a fire at 224
the base of a tree a short distance from the camp. In other Pygmy 372
groups I have seen a variation in which the fire is lighted within the camp, special sticks around it pointing in the direction the hunt is going to take. In this case the fire is surrounded by a long and heavy vine laid in a circle on the ground, and when the game is brought home it is placed within this circle before being divided. But this particular group, and others in the area, were less formal.

I remember one morning in particular when we went to kindle the Fire of the Hunt outside the camp, because it was the day that old Cephu committed one of the greatest sins possible in the forest.

I doubt if any of us had managed to snatch more than two hours' 765
sleep, and we were all quiet while preparing for the hunt. In a Pygmy 578 •
camp this is the surest danger signal of all, for usually everyone is talk- 152
ing and laughing and shouting rude remarks from one end of the camp to the other. It was not only that we were tired, but of late Cephu had refused to contribute to the molimo basket, and that morning he had been heard to call out, in his loudest voice, that he was fed up with the molimo of "that camp over there." Even though he always

765 Even though he[1] always
578 made his camp a short distance off it was close enough to be thought
152 of as the same camp, and whether or not we appreciated his presence
621 we thought of his camp and ours as being the same. Even his unwillingness to take part in the molimo was accepted, to maintain some semblance of unity; but this sudden statement made it impossible to ignore Cephu's feeling of rivalry any longer. Rather than cause an open breach, everyone in the main camp kept his thoughts to himself and was silent.

224 About an hour after dawn, four or five youths with their nets and
372 spears went off to light the hunting fire. I went with them, and only when we had crossed the Lelo and were on the other side did they speak. Then it was about trivialities, and soon they were chatting and laughing as though nothing were wrong. Shortly afterward we were joined by half a dozen of the younger married men, the most active hunters, and we lit the fire at the top of the hill. Leaves and twigs were piled around the base of a young tree, and an ember brought from the camp set them ablaze. More leaves were thrown on so that dense clouds of smoke went billowing up to the invisible sky, until finally the flames burst through with a great roar of victory.
[182] There was no great ritual or ceremonial, but somehow this act put the hunters in harmony with the forest and secured its blessing and assistance for the day's hunt. The Pygmies regard fire as the most precious gift of the forest, and by offering it back to the forest they are acknowledging their debt and their dependence.

224 As we sat around waiting for the others, one or two couples passed
[222] by. They were going ahead so they would have extra time for gathering mushrooms on the way. They paused to chat and then walked
224 on, lightly, swiftly, and gaily. Before long the main body of hunters
372 arrived and asked where Cephu was. We had not seen him. It
578 seemed that he had left the camp shortly after us but instead of
156 passing by the hunting fire had followed a different path. Someone suggested that he was building a fire of his own. This brought cries

[1] [i.e., Cephu. - Analyst]

of protest that not even Cephu would do such a thing. There was 224
much shaking of heads, and when Ekianga arrived and was told what 372
had happened he stood still for a moment, then turned around, look- 578 •
ing in all directions to see if there was any sign of smoke from an- 156
other fire. He said just one word, "Cephu," and spat on the ground. [201]

By the time we got to the place where we were to make our first cast of the nets everyone was more silent and miserable than ever. It did not make matters any better to find Cephu there already, [262] contentedly sitting over a fire eating roast plantains. He looked up and greeted us in a friendly way, and when asked why he had followed his own path he opened his eyes wide and softly said that he had misunderstood and taken the wrong trail. There were angry remarks, but Cephu ignored them all and went on munching at his plantain, smiling at everyone in his kind, gentle way.

Ekianga and a few others made a brief reconnaissance, and when 224 they came back they gave instructions as to the best direction for setting up the nets. The womenfolk, who had been foraging around for mushrooms and nuts, picked up their baskets and went ahead with the small children. They trod lightly and made no noise beyond an occasional crunch of a rotten branch, buried deep beneath the carpet of leaves. We all spread out in a long semicircle, each man knowing exactly who should be to his right and who to his left. I went with Maipe, who had been sent by Njobo with his net. We soon lost sight and sound of the others, but Maipe knew just where he would be expected to set up his net, and he took a short cut. I lost all sense of direction and could not even tell on which side of us the women were waiting for the signal to beat in toward our nets. We followed a little stream and paused by an enormous outcrop of huge stone boulders, almost perfectly square in shape, some of them eight feet across each face. Maipe looked around, then sat down to wait. After a few minutes Moke's nephew appeared to our left, stringing his net out through the undergrowth as he came.

825 starve?" I thought of turkey farms and Thanksgiving, and of the millions of animals reared by our own society with the sole intention of slaughtering them for food.

224 Ekianga was busy cutting up the sondu by the time I reached his net, for it was too large an animal to fit in his wife's basket. Usually game is brought back to camp before it is divided, and in some groups the dead antelope would have been sent back to camp immediately, around the neck and shoulders of one of the youngsters. But here the womenfolk crowded around as Ekianga hacked away, each claiming her share for her family. "My husband lent you his spear. . . ." "We gave your third wife some liver when she was hungry and you were away. . . ." "My father and yours always hunted side by side. . . ." These were all typical arguments, but for the most part they were not needed. Everyone knew who was entitled to a share, and by and large they stuck to the rules.

224 Above all the clamor, and in the process of re-coiling the nets and
578 assembling for the next cast, a disgruntled Cephu appeared and
156 complained that he had had no luck. He looked enviously at the sondu and the sindula, but nobody offered him a share. Maipe's mother hurriedly covered the chevrotain with leaves to avoid argument. She worked efficiently, not bothering to take the basket off but using her hands behind her back, and bouncing the basket on her buttocks until the dead animal was completely hidden by the leaves.

We went on for a mile or two and made another cast. Once more Cephu was unlucky, and this time he complained even more loudly, accusing the women of deliberately driving the animals away from his nets. They retorted that he had enough of his own womenfolk there, to which he replied rather ungallantly, "That makes no difference, they are a bunch of lazy empty-heads."

224 They were still arguing when they set off for the third cast. I
123 had caught sight of old Moke and stayed behind to talk to him. He

224 This dance[1] was still in progress when the main body of the hunters
578 returned. They strode into camp with glowering faces and threw
152 their nets on the ground outside their huts. Then they sat down,
156 with their chins in their hands, staring into space and saying nothing. The women followed, mostly with empty baskets, but they were by no means silent. They swore at each other, they swore at their husbands, and most of all they swore at Cephu. Moke looked across at me and smiled. He was skinning the civet.

I tried to find out what had happened, but nobody would say. Kenge, who had been sleeping, came out of our hut and joined the shouting. He was the only male who was not sitting down, and although he was young he had a powerful voice, and a colorful use of language. I heard him saying, "Cephu is an impotent old fool. No, he isn't, he is an impotent old animal—we have treated him like a man for long enough, now we should treat him like an animal. *Animal!*" He shouted the final epithet across at Cephu's camp, although Cephu had not yet returned.

The result of Kenge's tirade was that everyone calmed down and began criticizing Cephu a little less heatedly, but on every possible score: The way he always built his camp separately, the way he had even referred to it as a separate camp, the way he mistreated his relatives, his general deceitfulness, the dirtiness of his camp, and even his own personal habits.

The rest of the hunters came in shortly afterward, with Cephu leading. He strode across the camp and into his own little clearing
[765] without a word. Ekianga and Manyalibo, who brought up the rear, sat down at the kumamolimo and announced to the world at large that Cephu had disgraced them all and that they were going to tear down the kumamolimo and abandon the camp and end the molimo. Manyalibo shouted that he wanted everyone to come to the kumamolimo at once, even Cephu. This was a great matter and had to be settled immediately. Kenge, not slow to seize the opportunity

[1] [i.e., the imitation of the leopard--Analyst]

for reviving his earlier show of wit, relayed Manyalibo's message by 224 578 •
standing in midcamp and shouting over in Cephu's direction, 152
"*Nyama'e, nyama'e! Pika'i to, nyama UE!*" (Animal there! Animal 156
there! Come at once, *you*, you animal!") The youngsters all laughed loudly, but the older men paid no attention. This sent Kenge into a sulk and he started calling us all animals, adding that we were a lot of savages, just like the village people. But now not even the youngsters were listening, for Cephu had appeared.

Trying not to walk too quickly, yet afraid to dawdle too deliberately, he made an awkward entrance. For as good an actor as Cephu it was surprising. By the time he got to the kumamolimo everyone was doing something to occupy himself—staring into the fire or up at the tree tops, roasting plantains, smoking, or whittling away at arrow shafts. Only Ekianga and Manyalibo looked impatient, but they said nothing. Cephu walked into the group, and still nobody spoke. He went up to where a youth was sitting in a chair. Usually he would have been offered a seat without his having to ask, and now he did not dare ask, and the youth continued to sit there in as nonchalant a manner as he could muster. Cephu went to another chair where Amabosu was sitting. He shook it violently when Amabosu ignored him, at which he was told, "Animals lie on the ground."

This was too much for Cephu, and he went into a long diatribe about how he was one of the oldest hunters in the group, and one of the best hunters, and that he thought it was very wrong for everyone to treat him like an animal. Only villagers were like animals. Masisi spoke up in his favor and ordered Amabosu to give up his chair. Amabosu did so with a gesture of contempt and moved over to the far side of the group. Moke was the only one to stay completely apart. He sat outside his hut. He had finished skinning the [281]
civet and was twisting strands of vine together to make a frame for the hat. He looked peaceful and contented.

224 765 578 156 Manyalibo stood up and began a rather pompous statement of how everyone wanted this camp to be a good camp, and how everyone wanted the molimo to be a good molimo, with lots of singing, lots of eating, and lots of smoking. But Cephu never took part in the molimo, he pointed out. And Cephu's little group never contributed to the molimo basket. Manyalibo went on, listing the various ways in which Cephu had defaulted and made the camp into a bad camp instead of a good camp, and the molimo a bad molimo. And now, he added, Cephu had made the hunt a bad hunt. He recalled how on the first day, even before the camp was built, we had been presented with an antelope by the forest, but how ever since Cephu had joined us things had gone from bad to worse.

224 765 578 156 593 Cephu tried to interject that the molimo was really none of his business. At this Masisi, who had befriended him over the chair incident, and who had relatives in his camp, rounded on him sharply. He reminded Cephu that he had been glad enough to accept help and food and song when his daughter had died; now that his "mother" had died, why did he reject her? Cephu replied that Balekimito was not his mother. This was what everyone was waiting for. Not only did he name the dead woman, an unheard-of offense, [602] [621] but he denied that she was his mother. Even though there was only the most distant relationship, and that by marriage, it was equivalent to asserting that he did not belong to the same group as Ekianga and Manyalibo and the rest.

578 156 152 224 Ekianga leaped to his feet and brandished his hairy fist across the fire. He said that he hoped Cephu would fall on his spear and kill himself like the animal he was. Who but an animal would steal meat from others? There were cries of rage from everyone, and Cephu 224 578 156 burst into tears. Apparently, during the last cast of the nets Cephu, who had not trapped a single animal the whole day long, had slipped away from the others and set up his net in front of them. In this way

he caught the first of the animals fleeing from the beaters, but he 156 224 578
had not been able to retreat before he was discovered.

I had never heard of this happening before, and it was obviously 224
a serious offense. In a small and tightly knit hunting band, survival 578
can be achieved only by the closest co-operation and by an elaborate 621
system of reciprocal obligations which insures that everyone has some 476
share in the day's catch. Some days one gets more than others, but
nobody ever goes without. There is, as often as not, a great deal of
squabbling over the division of the game, but that is expected, and
nobody tries to take what is not his due.

Cephu tried very weakly to say that he had lost touch with the 224
others and was still waiting when he heard the beating begin. It was 578 156
only then that he had set up his net, where he was. Knowing that 558
nobody believed him, he added that in any case he felt he deserved
a better place in the line of nets. After all, was he not an important
man, a chief, in fact, of his own band? Manyalibo tugged at Ekianga
to sit down, and sitting down himself he said there was obviously no
use prolonging the discussion. Cephu was a big chief, and a chief was [186]
a villager, for the BaMbuti never have chiefs. And Cephu had his [829]
own band, of which he was chief, so let him go with it and hunt
elsewhere and be a chief elsewhere. Manyalibo ended a very eloquent speech with "*Pisa me taba*" ("Pass me the tobacco").

Cephu knew he was defeated and humiliated. Alone, his band 224
of four or five families was too small to make an efficient hunting 156 558
unit. He apologized profusely, reiterated that he really did not know 626
he had set up his net in front of the others, and said that in any
case he would hand over all the meat. This settled the matter, and
accompanied by most of the group he returned to his little camp and
brusquely ordered his wife to hand over the spoils. She had little
chance to refuse, as hands were already reaching into her basket and
under the leaves of the roof where she had hidden some liver in
anticipation of just such a contingency. Even her cooking pot was

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

One of the huts was in flames, and people were standing all 684
around, either crying or shouting. There was a lot of struggling going 835
on among a small group of men, and women were brandishing 627
fists in each other's faces. We decided to go back to the main camp,
which by then was filled with clusters of men and women standing
about discussing the affair. Not long afterward a contingent from
Cephu's group came over. They swore at the children, who, delighted [857]
by the whole thing, were imitating the epic flight and pursuit of
Kelemoke. The adults, in no joking frame of mind, sat down to have
a discussion. But the talking did not center around Kelemoke's act
so much as around the burning of the hut. Almost everyone seemed
to dismiss the act of incest. One of Kelemoke's uncles, Masalito,
with whom he had been staying since his father died, had great tears
rolling down his cheeks. He said, "Kelemoke only did what any
youth would do, and he has been caught and driven to the forest.
The forest will kill him. That is finished. But my own brother has [593]
burned down my hut and I have nowhere to sleep. I shall be cold.
And what if it rains? I shall die of cold and rain at the hands of my
brother."

The brother, Aberi, instead of taking up the point that Kelemoke 835
had dishonored his daughter, made a feeble protestation that he had 684
been insulted. Kelemoke should have taken more care. And Masalito 578 •
should have taught him better. This started the argument off on 602
different lines, and both families quarreled bitterly, accusing each [761]
other for more than an hour. Then the elders began to yawn and say [593]
they were tired; they wanted to go to sleep; we would settle it the
next day.

For a long time that night the camp was alive with whispered 835
remarks, and not a few rude jokes were thrown about from one hut 684
to another. The next day I went over to Cephu's camp and found [602]
the girl's mother busy helping to rebuild Masalito's hut; the two
men were sitting down and talking as though nothing much had
happened.

835 happened. All the youths told me not to worry about Kelemoke, that
684 they were secretly bringing him food in the forest, he was not far away.

835 Three days later, when the hunt returned in the late afternoon,
684 Kelemoke came wandering idly into the camp behind them, as though
626 he too had been hunting. He looked around cautiously, but nobody said a word or even looked at him. If they ignored him, at least they did not curse him. He came over to the bachelor's fire and sat down. For several minutes the conversation continued as though he were not there. I saw his face twitching, but he was too proud to speak first. Then a small child was sent over by her mother with a bowl of food, which she put in Kelemoke's hands and gave him a shy, friendly smile.

Kelemoke never flirted with his cousin again, and now, five years
[554] later, he is happily married and has two fine children. He does not have leprosy, and he is one of the best liked and most respected of the hunters.

626 I have never heard of anyone being completely ostracized, but the threat is always there, and is usually sufficient to insure good behavior. The two attitudes which disturb the Pygmy most are contempt and ridicule. Contempt is most effectively shown by ignoring someone, even if he comes and sits at the same fire. But it is difficult to maintain for long because hunters cannot afford to ignore a fellow hunter. So ostracism of this kind is infrequent and does not last. Almost as effective, and of much longer duration, is ridicule. The
[157] BaMbuti are good-natured people with an irresistible sense of humor;
[181] they are always making jokes about one another, even about them-
[522] selves, but their humor can be turned into an instrument of punishment when they choose.

593 Such a case was a great fight between the same two brothers who
578 had fallen out over Kelemoke's misdemeanors, Aberi and Masalito.

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

This incident shows as well as any how a tiny, and often imagined, 593
insult can be magnified out of all proportion until it becomes a serious 578
issue, threatening the peace of the camp. In any small, closed community, there are hidden tensions everlastingly at play. They are capricious, they are fluctuating and vapid, but every one of them is potentially explosive.

Of the two brothers Aberi was the elder. He was aggressive and 593
ugly, and he considered himself the head of the family. The oldest 578
brother, Kelemoke's father, had died. But Kelemoke had been 554 157
brought up by Masalito rather than Aberi because everyone agreed that Masalito, if younger, had much more sense. He was also a better hunter, a better singer, a better dancer, and considerably better-looking. He had a prettier wife too; Aberi's wife had lost half her face, [164]
which had been eaten away by yaws. So between these two brothers there were always strained feelings. Open conflict was avoided because Masalito usually lived with the main group, of which his wife was a member, while Aberi always hunted with Cephu, his cousin.

But Masalito was kindly and liked peace and quiet, so when Cephu joined the main group at Apa Lelo he often used to visit his brother in Cephu's camp. Aberi's wife was a hard-working woman, and although it was difficult to look at her without flinching, she was loved by everyone. One afternoon, on a rainy day, Masalito wandered over to visit his brother. Rainy days are not happy days in a hunting camp; they are often oppressive, and of course hunting is impossible. People are couped up in their tiny leaf huts, thinking of all the game that
is going uncaught. Aberi was sleeping, so Masalito sat down beside 578
his sister-in-law, Tamasa, and asked her for a smoke. She passed him 607
the clay pipe bowl and a little tobacco, and a long stem cut freshly 276
from the center of a plantain leaf. She had recently come back from a 576
visit to a Negro village and had brought several of these stems with her, as they give by far the best smoke.

Masalito smoked a few puffs, then passed the pipe to Tamasa. But

578 instead of accepting it she abruptly turned it upside down and
607 knocked the remaining tobacco out into the dirt. This was not only
276 wasteful, but a deliberate insult. Masalito did not want to take
576 offense, so he gave Tamasa the chance to re-establish good relations. He asked her to give him one of the new pipestems to take back to his hut for himself and his wife to enjoy. To refuse her husband's brother would be an open act of aggression quite uncalled for, and if she made the gift she would automatically cancel the previous insult. Masalito thought that he had not only maneuvered the political situation to his advantage but also won for himself and his wife a new pipestem. Unfortunately he had chosen a bad day.

[422] Tamasa felt that Masalito was trying to get the better of her, and to get her to give away her husband's property while he was asleep, without asking him. She said, "Certainly I will give you a pipestem." Then she went behind the hut, where all the rubbish was thrown, and came back with a withered and smelly stump of a pipe. It had been pared away so often between smokes, to keep the mouthpiece fresh, that it was now only two feet long instead of six or seven. And instead of being fresh and green and juicy it was stale and brown and dry, reeking of old tobacco and spittle. This she presented to
[152] Masalito, who was so upset that he cried with rage, and asked why she and Aberi always treated him so badly. Tamasa promptly retorted that it was not bad treatment to feed him and give him tobacco every time he came over from his camp. Didn't his wife look after him, that he had to come and scrounge from his brother?

[152] This was too much for Masalito, who had wanted only to be on good terms with everyone. He called Tamasa a name that one should
593 never use to one's brother's wife, and Tamasa started crying. This
578 awakened Aberi, who came out of his hut sleepily, looking uglier
276 than ever. Without trying to explain, Masalito, still sobbing tear-
152 lessly with rage, hit his brother over the head with the withered pipestem Tamasa had given him. Brandishing the offending article above

his head he stalked back to the main camp shouting at the top of 593
his voice what miserable wretches his brother and his sister-in-law 578
were. The dirty old pipe was damning evidence, and all sympathy 276
was with Masalito. Njobo's wife took her husband's pipestem and 152
gave it to Masalito, who quickly regained his good humor. But by now Aberi was aroused, and came storming into the camp, saying that his brother had insulted Tamasa. He declared that it was a matter for serious action; Masalito should be thrashed.

Everybody thought this was a great joke, and burst into laughter Only children and youths get thrashed, and Masalito was a father. Aberi did not like being laughed at and he went over to where Masalito was sitting down on a log, smoking his new pipe. He demanded an apology. Masalito, now completely composed, simply picked up the old pipestem and threw it at his brother's feet, saying, "There! That is for her!" By now a crowd had gathered around, and the hotter Aberi became the more relaxed Masalito seemed to be.

Aberi shook his fists and said that if nobody else was going to 593
thrash Masalito he was. This brought more laughs as Aberi was positively 578
puny beside Masalito, who himself was little more than four 152
feet tall. Masalito invited his brother to come and try. Aberi then [141]
pretended that he was holding a spear, and in a high-pitched voice, squeaking with anger, he cried out, "I am going to get my spear and I am going to kill you completely!" Whereupon he imitated a spear thrust in Masalito's direction. There was a gasp of horror, as this is something one does not say to one's brother even in jest. But Masalito replied calmly, "Go and get your spear, then, and come back and kill me. I'll still be here. You don't have the courage to kill your brother." He said a lot of other things, goading Aberi on to an even
higher pitch of fury. Aberi tried to make himself more impressive by [536]
a graphic dance, which was meant to show exactly how he was going to leap in the air and twist around and drive the spear home. But he

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578 was not a good dancer, and when he tried to illustrate the leap he
152 fell flat on his face.

[536] That was the end of the matter for Aberi. For weeks he was ridiculed, everyone asking him if he had lost his spear, or telling him to be careful not to trip and fall. But it was not quite the end of the matter for Masalito. He felt more angry than ever at his brother, because Aberi had made himself, and so the whole family, an object of ridicule. Masalito felt this an added insult to himself. Even Kelemoke was furious. So relations between the two brothers got worse and worse, and every time there was a silence in the camp Masalito would complain in a loud voice about his brother and his brother's wife.

593 At first this was tolerated, but finally it threatened to split the
578 camp in two. Masalito began naming all his friends and relatives to
152 support him in ignoring Aberi; he refused to say a word to his
621 brother. Of course his brother could claim support from the same
626
689 relatives and friends, and tension was spreading throughout both camps. That was when the molimo stepped in and showed public disapproval of Masalito. The original source of the dispute, and Aberi's undoubted wrongdoing, were forgotten. Masalito was guilty of the much more serious crime of splitting the hunting band into opposing factions. He himself was then ridiculed and shamed into silence. After that it was only one or two days before the two brothers became good friends and hunting companions once again.

578 Disputes were generally settled with little reference to the alleged
626
576 rights and wrongs of the case, but chiefly with the intention of restor-
836 ing peace to the community. One night Kenge slipped out of our
hut on an amorous expedition to the hut of Manyalibo, who had an
[152] attractive daughter, one of Kenge's many admirers. Shortly afterward there was a howl of rage and Kenge came flying back across the

578 •
clearing with a furious Manyalibo hurling sticks and stones after him. 626
Manyalibo then took up a position in the middle of the clearing and 916 836.
woke the whole camp up, calling out in a loud voice and denouncing [152]
Kenge as an incestuous good-for-nothing. Actually Kenge was only very distantly related to the girl, and the flirtation was not at all out of order, though marriage might have been. Several people tried to point this out to Manyalibo, but he became increasingly vociferous. He said that it wasn't so much that Kenge had tried to sleep with his daughter, but that he had been brazen enough to crawl right over her sleeping father to get at her, waking him up in the process. This was a considered insult, for any decent youth would have made a prior arrangement to meet his girl elsewhere. He called on Kenge to justify himself. But Kenge was too busy laughing and only managed to call out "You are making too much noise!" This seemed a poor defense, but in fact it was not. Manyalibo set up another hue and cry about Kenge's general immorality and disrespect for his elders, and strode up and down the camp rattling on the roofs of huts to call everyone to his defense.

Moke took the place in the center of the camp where Manyalibo 578
had stood, and where everyone stands who wants to address the whole 626
camp formally. He gave a low whistle, like the whistle given on the 554
hunt to call for silence. When everyone was quiet he told Manyalibo that the noise was giving him a headache, and he wanted to sleep. Manyalibo retorted that this matter was more serious than Moke's sleep. Moke replied in a very deliberate, quiet voice, "You are making too much noise—you are killing the forest, you are killing the hunt. It is for us older men to sleep at night and not to worry about the youngsters. They know what to do and what not to do." Manyalibo growled with dissatisfaction, but he went back to his hut, taunted by well-directed remarks from Kenge and his friends.

Whether Kenge had done something wrong or not was relatively 578
immaterial. Manyalibo had done the greater wrong by waking the 689

578 689 whole camp and by making so much noise that all the animals would be frightened away, spoiling the next day's hunting. The Pygmies have a saying that a noisy camp is a hungry camp.

685 [186] Some misdemeanors are very simply dealt with. A Pygmy thinks nothing of stealing from Negroes; they are, after all, only animals, as seen by Pygmy eyes. But among themselves theft is virtually nonexistent. For one thing, they have few possessions, and for another there is no necessity for theft except through laziness.

685 159 [589] Pepei was such a lazy Pygmy, and he was always stealing from the Negroes. But out in the forest he was forced to work for his food, to build his own hut if he wanted one (he was a bachelor but liked having his own hut, sharing it with his younger brother), and he had to make his own bows and arrows and hunting net, and to cook his own food. This was hard on Pepei, and although he meant no harm he could not resist slipping around the camp at night, taking a leaf from this hut and a leaf from that, until he had enough to thatch his own hut—which he made by acquiring saplings in a similar manner. Food used to disappear mysteriously, and Pepei had always seen a dog stealing it. But finally he was caught in the act by old Sau, Amabosu's mother, who was a very strange and frightening old lady. Pepei crept into her hut one night and was lifting the lid of a pot when she smacked him hard on the wrist with a wooden pestle. She then grabbed him by the arm, twisting it behind his back, and forced him out into the open.

Nobody really minded Pepei's stealing, because he was a born comic and a great storyteller. But he had gone too far in stealing from old Sau, who had lost her husband and was supported by her son 685 159 627 Amabosu and his wife. So the men ran out of their huts angrily and held Pepei, while the youths broke off thorny branches and whipped him until he managed to break away. He went running as fast as he could into the forest; he cried bitterly and wrapped his arms around

himself for comfort. He stayed in the forest for nearly twenty-four 685
hours, and when he came back the next night he went straight to 159
his hut, unseen, and lay down to sleep. His hut was between mine 627
and Sau's, and I heard him come in, and I heard him crying softly [052]
because even his brother wouldn't speak to him.

The next day Pepei was his old self, and everyone was glad to see him laughing; they were happy to be able to listen to his jokes, and they all gave him food so that he wouldn't have to steal again.

But sometimes a dispute cannot be settled in any of these ways. It 578
blows up too quickly to be ended by ridicule; the participants are
too old to be thrashed; yet it is not serious enough to merit ostracism.
Such disputes are usually trivial in origin, and often arise from the
confined and close conditions of living. Personal relations become very 578
involved in a hunting group, particularly when both members of a 583
sister-exchange marriage are living in the same group.

Under this system, when a boy chooses a wife he becomes obliged to find a "sister"—actually any girl relative—to offer in exchange to his bride's family for one of their bachelor sons. This can be quite a chore, as it may be difficult to find a "sister" who is willing to marry the youth his in-laws have in mind as a groom, and whom the groom himself will also like.

Amabosu had married Ekianga's sister, and Ekianga had married, 543
as his third wife, Amabosu's sister, the beautiful Kamaikan. He had 595
578
just had a child by her, while Amabosu was still childless. Since 853
Kamaikan was nursing a child, Ekianga was under an obligation not 607
to sleep with her, and his two other wives were happy that at last they [583]
could expect him to pay them some attention. But to everyone's dismay he continued to sleep with Kamaikan. And one day Amabosu started making loud remarks across the camp about his sister's health.

This was not at Apa Lelo, but at a later camp Apa Kadiketu. Amabosu's hut was to my right, and it faced directly across toward

607
593 the first of Ekianga's huts, the largest and the best, built by himself
595 and Kamaikan. Amabosu was sitting down at his fire at the time,
853
978 and his wife was sitting near him, peeling mushrooms for the evening
[252] meal. Ekianga was inside the hut with Kamaikan, who had given the baby to her old mother, Sau, to look after for a few hours. At first Amabosu's remarks brought no response from the closed hut. But he became more and more explicit, denouncing Ekianga's shame in considerable and intimate detail, hinting that what was going on inside the hut at that moment was precisely what every new mother should avoid if she was to be able to look after the baby properly and give it lots of milk.

593 At last Ekianga retorted angrily from inside the hut. Amabosu
595 continued to sit quietly, staring into the fire, with his wide, strange
411 eyes. He answered in as caustic tones as he could find. In the end,
978 Ekianga's door burst open and Ekianga appeared, spear in hand. He
607 looked wild with fury and shame, and he flexed his muscles and hurled the spear at Amabosu with all his might. Amabosu looked up from the fire for the first time, but sat perfectly still with not a flicker of emotion on his face, his eyes still wide and cold and staring. The spear struck the ground within twelve inches of his feet, which was probably exactly where it had been intended to land. Amabosu calmly rose, pulled the spear free, and tossed it behind his hut into the rubbish dump. This was just about as insulting a gesture as he could have made at that moment, and it started one of the most dramatic fights I have seen in a Pygmy camp, and one of the most complicated.

593 As long as it was between the two men all was well, but the wives
595 were torn between their loyalties as wives and as sisters. Amabosu's
978 wife entered the fray by swearing at her husband for throwing her
607 brother's spear into the rubbish dump. Amabosu countered by smacking her firmly across the face. Normally Ekianga would have approved of such manly assertion of authority over a disloyal wife, but as

the wife was his sister he retaliated by going into his hut and dragging 593
out Kamaikan, whom he in turn publicly smacked across *her* face. 595
Kamaikan was made of tough stock. She picked up a log from the 578
fire and beat her husband over the back with it. It is difficult to 607
remember just exactly what the sequence of events was after that.

The two wives began fighting tooth and nail, quite literally. The men battled with burning logs, three or four feet long, swinging them from the cool end, but always just missing each other. Every now and again one of the girls would break free and go to the assistance of her brother, and the other would run and pull her away.

As always, a large crowd gathered—men, women and children.
But nobody volunteered to stop the fight or to adjudicate in any way.
They took one side or the other, either according to the rights and
wrongs of the issue, or merely on the grounds that one or the other
was the better fighter and more likely to win. The general opinion [853]
was that Ekianga should certainly not be sleeping with Kamaikan
while she was nursing a baby, but since Kamaikan was equally at
fault, Amabosu was wrong in defending her. By and large, however,
the onlookers were more interested in the fight than the issue at stake.

As the fight grew more serious, and some visible damage was being done to all four parties, first relatives and then friends began to take sides more vigorously, and it looked as though fighting were going to break out all over the camp. At that moment Arobanai, Ekianga's senior wife, came striding out of her hut and announced in her deep contralto voice that she couldn't rest with all this noise going on, so it would have to stop. To make her impartiality quite plain she added that her animal of a husband could sleep with anyone he wanted to as far as she was concerned. She then went to where the two girls were locked together, both looking very much the worse for wear. She pulled them apart, and having given Amabosu's wife a hefty kick she took Kamaikan tenderly and led her back to her own hut.

593 At this, old Sau, who had been sitting on the ground throughout,
595 with Kamaikan's baby on her lap, handed the baby to her weeping
578 daughter-in-law and slowly got to her feet. Her son and Ekianga
606
607 were now both armed with stout sticks, about four inches thick and
887 three feet long, and they were lashing out with no reservations. Sau hobbled up to them and calmly pushed her way between; then she turned and put her head against Ekianga's stomach and her backside against her son's legs, and forced them apart. They continued trying to fight each other around the old lady, reaching out far so as not to hit her, but it was just too difficult. Ekianga was the first to throw away his weapon, which he did over Sau's head, with all his might. But Amabosu ducked and it missed him. Amabosu then threw his club on the ground and led his mother back to his hut. His wife meanwhile had been joined by Kamaikan, and they both were playing happily with the baby.

621 This incident illustrates one of the most remarkable features of
626 Pygmy life—the way everything settles itself with apparent lack
578 of organization. Co-operation is the key to Pygmy society; you can
181 expect it and you can demand it, and you have to give it. If your wife nags you at night so that you cannot sleep, you merely have to raise your voice and call on your friends and relatives to help you. Your wife will do the same, so whether you like it or not the whole camp becomes involved. At this point someone—very often an older person with too many relatives and friends to be accused of being partisan—steps in with the familiar remark that everyone is making too much noise, or else diverts the issue onto a totally different track so that people forget the origin of the argument and give it up.

621 Issues other than disputes are settled the same way, without leader-
626 ship appearing from any particular individual. If it is a matter involv-
578 ing the hunt, every adult male discusses it until there is agreement.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

The women can throw in their opinions, particularly if they know 621 626
that the area the men have selected is barren of vegetable foods. But 578
the men usually know this anyway.

If the question is one of marriage, and a father announces that he 626
does not like the girl his son has chosen, his son can call on all his 593
friends to help him. If he is strong and holds out, the whole group 584
will be assembled to discuss the case. If they agree with the father,
then either the boy has to give up his talk of matrimony or else make
up his mind to marry the girl anyway. In the latter case he would
probably go and live with her hunting group. But it is seldom that
things come to such a pass.

In fact, Pygmies dislike and avoid personal authority, though they 626
are by no means devoid of a sense of responsibility. It is rather that 157
they think of responsibility as communal. If you ask a father, or a 181
husband, why he allows his son to flirt with a married girl, or his
wife to flirt with other men, he will answer, "It is not my affair," and
he is right. It is *their* affair, and the affair of the other men and
women, and of their brothers and sisters. He will try to settle it
himself, either by argument or by a good beating, but if this fails
he brings everyone else into the dispute so that he is absolved of
personal responsibility.

If you ask a Pygmy why his people have no chiefs, no lawgivers, 621
no councils, or no leaders, he will answer with misleading simplicity, 829
"Because we are the people of the forest." The forest, the great pro- 778
vider, is the one standard by which all deeds and thoughts are judged;
it is the chief, the lawgiver, the leader, and the final arbitrator.

286 women, and although a man will attend to his own net, repairing it
[462] and adding to it, a mother will often make a complete hunting net
to present to her son when he gets married.

342 The other major activity that goes on almost every day in any
356 Pygmy camp is the repairing and alteration of the huts. New leaves
have to be added, or the old ones changed to avoid leaks. If relatives
come to visit, either the house has to be enlarged or a new one built.
Whenever this happens there are repercussions throughout the camp,
since people will have to change the entrances to their huts to avoid
342 looking directly into the stranger's hut. The entrances also get changed
356 if there are arguments between two families. The two disputants,
• 578 though they may be next door to each other, will build little "spite
fences" between them, so that their huts are turned almost back to
back, the walls in effect turning the doorways to face in opposite
directions. Then the doorway may face into someone else's hut, and
if that family is not in sympathy, their doorway in turn will be
changed, and so on.

342 These changes are usually made by the women, since the hut is
462 considered the woman's property. This is one of the strongest points
593 a woman has in arguments with her husband. I have seen a woman
[356] who has failed to get anywhere in a matrimonial disagreement simply
[423] turn around and start methodically pulling all the leaves off the hut.
Usually the husband stops her halfway. In this case, however, the
husband was particularly stubborn. He waited until she had taken
all the leaves off, then remarked to the camp at large that his wife
was going to be dreadfully cold that night. There was nothing for
her to do, without losing face, but to continue; so reluctantly, and
very slowly, she started to pull out the sticks that formed the framework of her home.

By this time the camp was agog, because it had been a long time since anyone had seen a domestic argument carried quite this far. The poor woman was in tears, for she was very much in love with her

commercial village that was set up on the roadside, by the govern- 361
ment, immediately after Pat's death. The main focus of the village 177
was not, as in so many villages, in either special plantations or road 621
work, but in the Station de Chasse. This, with its collection of live
forest animals, became an attraction for wealthy tourists with time
and money enough to make the trip from Stanleyville or Beni; hence
the optimistic Belgian who built the motel directly opposite. A little
farther up the road, away from the river, were the houses of several
hundred workers. This village stretched right up to the entrance of
Camp Putnam, and beyond was the Hotel de Bière and a line of a
half-dozen or so stores. The majority of these villagers, as in Camp
Putnam, were from distant districts and from many different tribes.
But here they had nobody to hold them together, as Putnam had
his workers; their disputes were settled arbitrarily, according to Bel-
gian notions of right and wrong. It was a village filled with jealousies, [578] •
deep-seated grievances and smoldering hatred.

A few kilometers to each side of the Epulu River were two tradi- 361
tional villages. To the west was Dar es Salaam. The name was 181
brought from the coast by the slave-traders, and its inhabitants were 175
all descendants of the almost universally disliked BaNgwana, who
had sold their souls to the traders and helped them in the capture of
slaves and the theft of ivory. The headman of Dar es Salaam was a [622]
friendly rogue, Musafili. About two kilometers away from Dar es [563]
Salaam was the camp of Musafili's Pygmies. Like every other Negro
he referred to "his" Pygmies as though they were chattels. Although
Dar es Salaam always offered the warmest hospitality, I never felt
at ease there. The heritage of a bloody and treacherous past was only
barely dormant, and the BaNgwana are suspected today, as they
always have been, of practicing the most dreaded forms of witch-
craft and sorcery.

A little farther to the other side of the Epulu was a very different 361
village, and one much more typical of the traditional settlement in

222 gathered, but the forest gives its people honey only during two happy 262 months. It gives with even greater abundance, however, and the honey season is a season for abandoned merry-making, when even the cares of hunting become unimportant, as each individual, young or old, male or female, sets off every morning in quest of this precious gift. Above all, it is a season for rejoicing, for dancing and singing.

222 It is also a season when hunting groups split up into even smaller 621 units, each going its own way, claiming certain honey trees for its own by marking them with a vine tied around the base or with some other sign that they know will be respected by all other Pygmies. Only villagers would be capable of breaking such a trust. And so it 222 is also a time when the Pygmies tell stories for the benefit of the 177 villagers of the dreadful and dangerous spirits that they have to fight in order to get the honey. Naturally enough, then, it is a time when the villagers prefer to leave the Pygmies, and the forest, well alone.

222 Cephu was already off on his own, slyly camping near the valley 621 that divides the territory of the Epulu Pygmies from that of the next group to the west. He had relatives in both groups, and he felt able to claim trees in both territories, depending on where he thought he would do best. Those that were left split into two bands. One set off with Ekianga, far away to the north of Kaweki's fishing camp. There they hoped to combine good hunting with the honey quest. [439] A few made a permanent halfway camp so that they could act as a convenient relay station between Ekianga and the village, using the surplus meat to obtain luxuries that would help make the season even more festive.

222 Masisi, however, refused to have anything to do with this plan. 621 The honey season was no time to be bothered with hunting, he said, • 578 177 and in any case he was fed up with village food and village tobacco and dirty village water. He wanted to forget about the village and eat nothing but forest food. He decided on an area that was little frequented. There was a great deal of dissension among those who

otherwise would have followed him without question, but Masisi was 222 621
adamant. He said he was going anyway; whether anyone else came 578
or not did not worry him. His cousin, Manyalibo, was in a quandary. 177
Morally he was bound to support his relative, but he was tempted by Ekianga's idea of getting the best of both worlds. Visions of both meat and honey won, and he announced that he was going with Ekianga.

Masisi with the true Pygmy sense of drama said that Manyalibo 222
was a disgrace, and that as everyone else obviously wanted to behave 621
like villagers he would go off on his own. In a loud dramatic voice 578
he commanded his wife to pack her belongings. Within an hour or so they set off, followed by their two children, Akobo and Ageronga. There was some discussion after they had left, and Njobo's sister,
Teningbenge, and her son Maipe, decided to follow Masisi. With [734]
them went Masamba, Njobo's wife; Njobo himself was still in Bunia with his son, Nyange, looking after the boy who was being treated for severe tuberculosis of the bone. The next to follow them was old Asofalinda, who said that she wanted nothing to do with her brother Ekianga. If Ekianga intended to waste his honey season hunting, he could do so without her. This somewhat counterbalanced Manyalibo's desertion of Masisi, and everyone thought it a great idea. She packed her few things together and set off, still denouncing
Ekianga as a fool. She carried her crippled little daughter on her side 734
and her bundle slung over her back. Lizabeti was a pathetic child whose hip had been diseased since birth. She had never walked but had spent her ten years of life crawling around on her buttocks, dragging one withered leg after her, using the other leg and her two hands to swing her body along as she vainly tried to follow other children in their games. Mambunia, Masisi's brother, himself with a leg twisted by infantile paralysis, went limping after Asofalinda,
shouting that he would come and help her carry Lizabeti. As he 621
left, clutching a spear in one hand, he told me that Masisi would

222 527 camp resounded to songs of joy and praise, accompanied by the ringing
517 of the ngbengbe sticks as they were clapped together in complex
[538] cross rhythms by boys and girls alike. Every night Masisi told his group, which had steadily grown ever since the beginning, stories
[825] about the past. And every night we went to bed content, knowing that the morrow would be even better; for each day we discovered fresh growths of mushrooms, trees full of different kinds of nuts, and each night the chameleon gave its long, sad cry, to tell us that on the morrow we would have more honey.

222 One night in particular will always live for me, because that night
535 I think I learned just how far away we civilized human beings have
517 drifted from reality. The moon was full, so the dancing had gone on for longer than usual. Just before going to sleep I was standing outside my hut when I heard a curious noise from the nearby children's bopi. This surprised me, because at nighttime the Pygmies generally never set foot outside the main camp. I wandered over to see what it was.

[301] There, in the tiny clearing, splashed with silver, was the sophisticated Kenge, clad in bark cloth, adorned with leaves, with a flower stuck in his hair. He was all alone, dancing around and singing softly to himself as he gazed up at the treetops.

Now Kenge was the biggest flirt for miles, so, after watching a while, I came into the clearing and asked, jokingly, why he was dancing alone. He stopped, turned slowly around and looked at me as though I was the biggest fool he had ever seen; and he was plainly surprised by my stupidity.

[778] "But I'm *not* dancing alone," he said. "I am dancing with the
[821] forest, dancing with the moon." Then, with the utmost unconcern, he ignored me and continued his dance of love and life.

621 As the weeks went by, however, a note of dissatisfaction stirred
● 578 in the camp. Masisi began to complain that the others, including
602 224 Manyalibo, were way off to the north getting meat, yet they had

sent him, their own brother, none. And why did they not come and join him? I expect that Ekianga was saying the same thing about Masisi in the south, with all his honey. 621 578 602 224

One day I decided to go and see for myself. With Kenge I set off early in the morning, but after several hours of rapid trekking we came to a deserted camp. The fires still smoked, and it had obviously not been long abandoned. We scavenged around and found two spears and a bow and some arrows that had been left behind, presumably in the hurry to get away before we arrived. There were also several baskets and pots. Armed with the more worthwhile trophies we returned to Apa Toangbe. Masisi was wild with fury at this deliberate insult. He told Kenge and me to go off again the next day and find the others, and bring him back some meat.

We found them a considerable distance away. They were thoroughly surprised, having thought we would have been shaken off and discouraged. They hurriedly tried to conceal the great amount of dried meat that had been accumulating, but they could not hide it all. So they criticized Kenge for having been so mistrustful as to sneak up on them silently from the side, instead of using the main trail.

Kenge replied that in our experience we found that main trails only led to deserted camps. He then delivered Masisi's comments in full. The comments were pithy, and Kenge added his own embellishments. He dwelt mainly on family loyalties. There was no doubt that Manyalibo was wrong; he had even taken Masisi's hunting net, promising to send meat, and had never sent any. Njobo's net was there, too, yet his sister, Maipe's mother, had received none of the meat it had trapped. Ekianga himself had sent no meat to Asofalinda.

I had expected a spirited defense, but Manyalibo slowly came out of his hut, where he was hiding, and said grandly that we could take all his meat back to Masisi; he had had enough, and anyway he had really been saving it for his "brother." He added that as for

621 578 224 [602] joining Masisi, there was not much sense doing that now, as everyone would probably be moving camp soon. Why didn't we all meet later somewhere near Apa Kadiketu?

Kenge and I returned, laden down with meat and protestations of friendship. Much the same thing happened when Masisi thought he would try similar tactics on Cephu. This time I went with Kelemoke, who had come to stay with us because he said he found Cephu's camp far too noisy. It was not much more than three hours away, and it was plain that Cephu had settled in well with his friends and relatives, because he was almost in the middle of a large and [574] industrious camp. Everyone seemed to be eating well, and Cephu offered us food, which was unusual for him. He did not part with any meat—he had already heard of our haul at Ekianga's camp and asked why we had brought him none. I told him that Masisi thought it would be a good thing if he joined us and the others, and that he would get plenty of meat then. Cephu said he would think about it, but he was offended that we had brought him nothing.

Masisi pondered over these things for several days, and our evenings became interspersed with brief arguments between him and Mambunia and Kelemoke as to what they should do. Everyone was beginning to be hungry for meat again, and although Ekianga and Manyalibo had promised to send our nets back, they never did. We did not have enough people in our own camp to make a successful hunt. In the end Masisi made up his mind to steal a march on the others and get to Apa Kadiketu before they did. By this time we had been joined by a number of bachelors from both the other camps, and also by a third group of distant in-laws of Masisi, all of whom had learned that we were getting a great deal of honey.

621 628 On our way to Apa Kadiketu we heard news that brought matters to a head. We met Madyadya coming hotfoot from the direction of the village to warn Ekianga that a group of foreign Pygmies from the other side of the Epulu had invaded our territory and were steal-

ing all our honey to the east. Masisi immediately sent his son with 621
Madyadya to tell Manyalibo to forget the quarrel about the nets and 628
come and join him at once at Apa Kadiketu so that we could all make war on the other Pygmies together. He also sent Kelemoke with the same message to Cephu. We pressed on and built our camp in a hum of excitement.

Kenge saw that I was taking this all very seriously, and he led me to one side. "Old Masisi's head is unsteady," he said. "It has worms in it. He will fight only with words. Every year those Pygmies come into our land and we go into theirs. There is plenty of food; so long as we do not meet there is no fighting. If we do meet, then those who are not in their own land run away and leave behind whatever they have stolen. That is the only way we ever fight—we are not villagers."

But it was a wonderful fight of words, particularly when Ekianga 621
and the others joined us. There was so much disagreement that 578 •
Masisi said he was not ready to live in the same camp with them yet, and he removed himself to another camp about half a mile away. Cephu, still not sure which way the wind was blowing, camped between the two, and to one side, making a perfect triangle. For a
whole week messengers were being sent back and forth. Eventually [628]
the invaders, presumably having had their fill of honey, retreated across the Epulu, declaring that never again would they enter such inhospitable territory.

But everyone was far too busy scouring the countryside and mark- 621
ing out new honey trees to be seriously bothered. It was strange to [222]
see how this familiar old camp took new shape. Any vestiges of old 621
huts were cleared away, except for the remains of the one where I 122
had lived, and that of Ekianga, both of which were made better and bigger. I did not take my old hut but moved to the far end, where Cephu had been, near to Moke. Ekianga and all his three wives, now on good terms with one another, were to the other side of me.